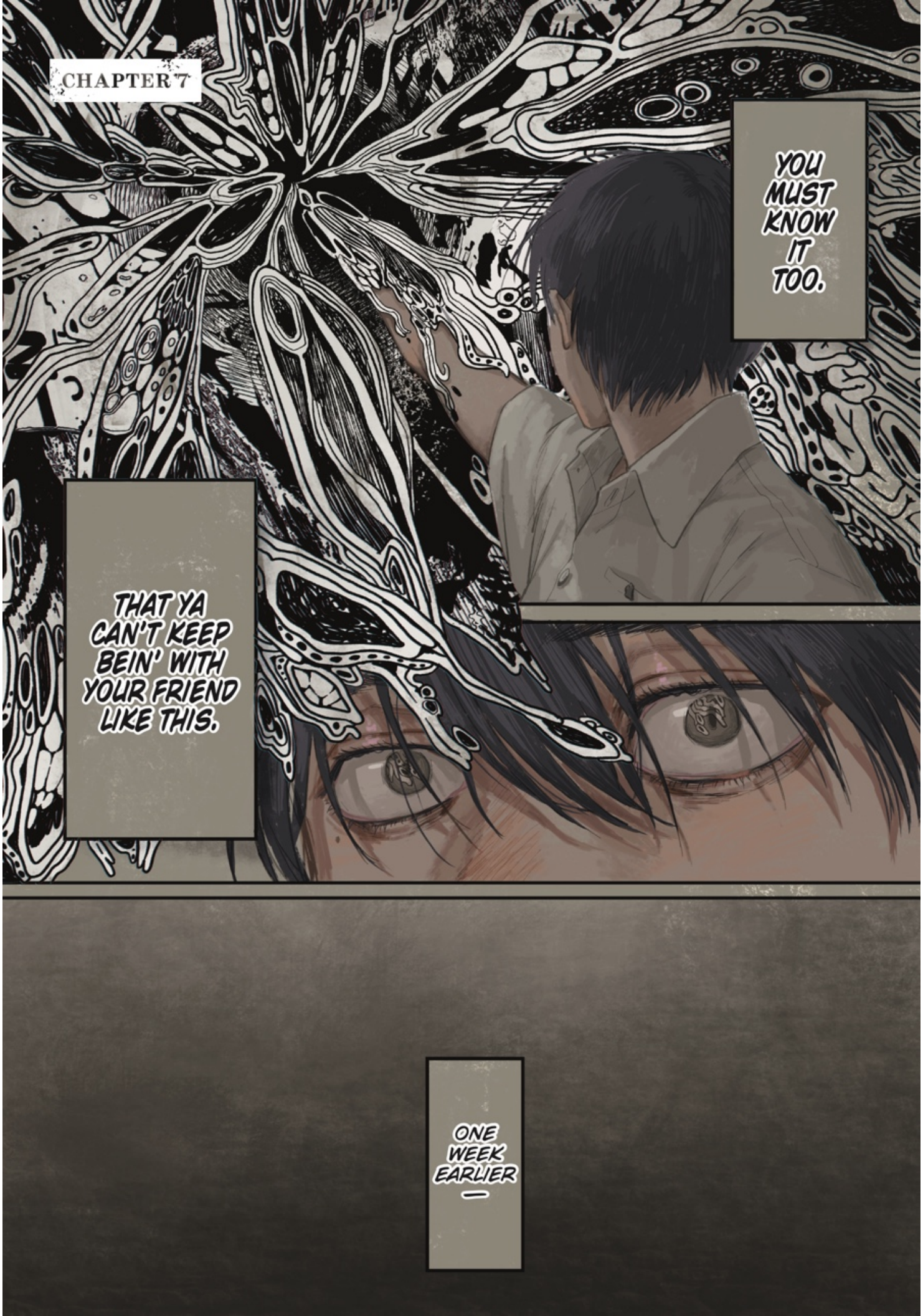
MOKUMOKUREN

2

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED


CHAPTER 7
YOU MUST KNOW IT TOO.
THAT YA CAN'T KEEP BEIN' WITH YOUR FRIEND LIKE THIS.
ONE WEEK EARLIER —

THE SUMMER
HIKARU
DIED
MOKUMOKUREN
2
CHAPTER 7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 7 ——— 001

Chapter 8 ——— 043

Chapter 9 ——— 071

Chapter 10 ——— 105

Chapter 11 ——— 141

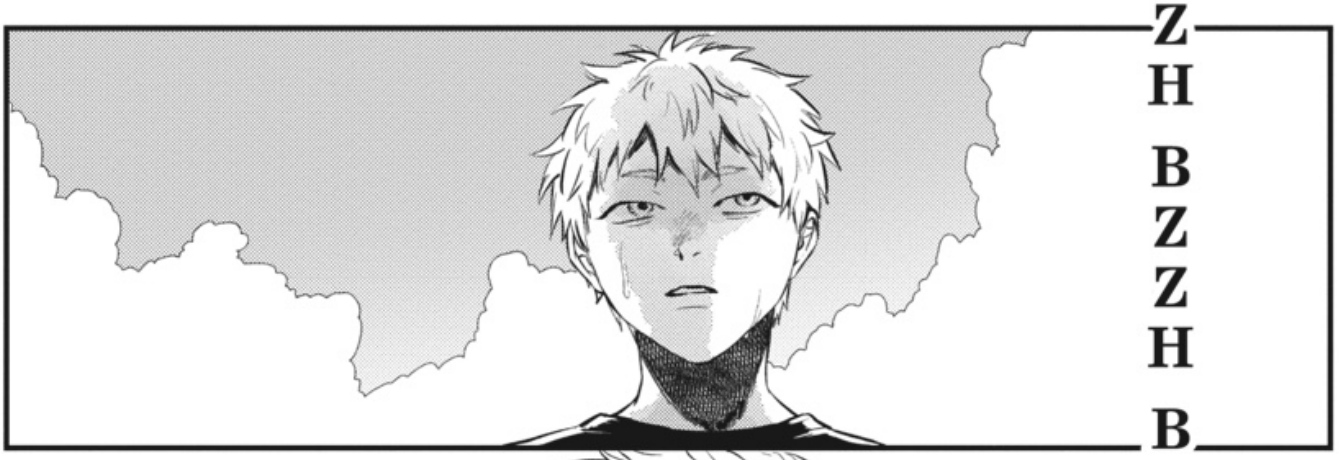
Bonus ——— 173

13:01
13:01
Rie Kurebayashi >
Feel like talking now?
...WHO'S...
...THIS?

.....
...?
YA GOT...
...SOME SORTA MESSAGE...
.....
AH, YEAH...
FROM MY MOM... AIN'T NOTHIN' SPECIAL.
SHT

HIKA-RUUU!
GO AN' BUY SOME BEER FROM YAMAHISA RIGHT QUICK.
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
SURE THING.
B·Z·Z·H
HOO-EE! IT'S HOT AS HELL!!
BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH
B·Z·Z·H–B·Z·Z·H
THE HECK...!?
BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH

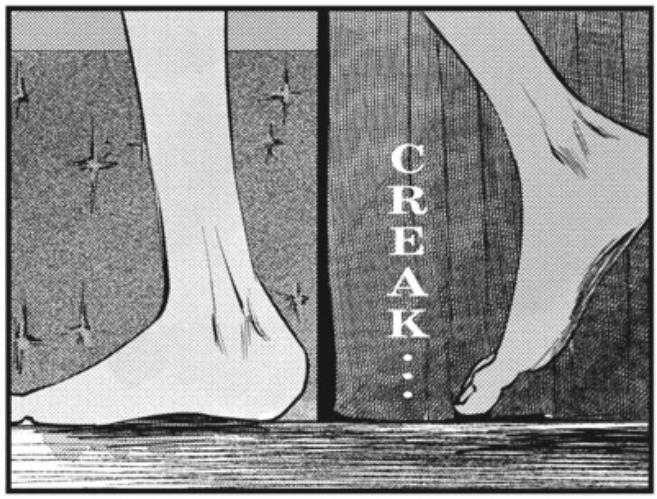


BZZH BZZH BZZH

SLAP
BZZH
GO AWAY!

FWIP
TRUTH IS, I DON'T NEED YOU ANYMORE.
I DON'T NEED...
...A [redacted] LIKE YOU...
HUH...?
WHA—?
WH...
WHY?

AH!

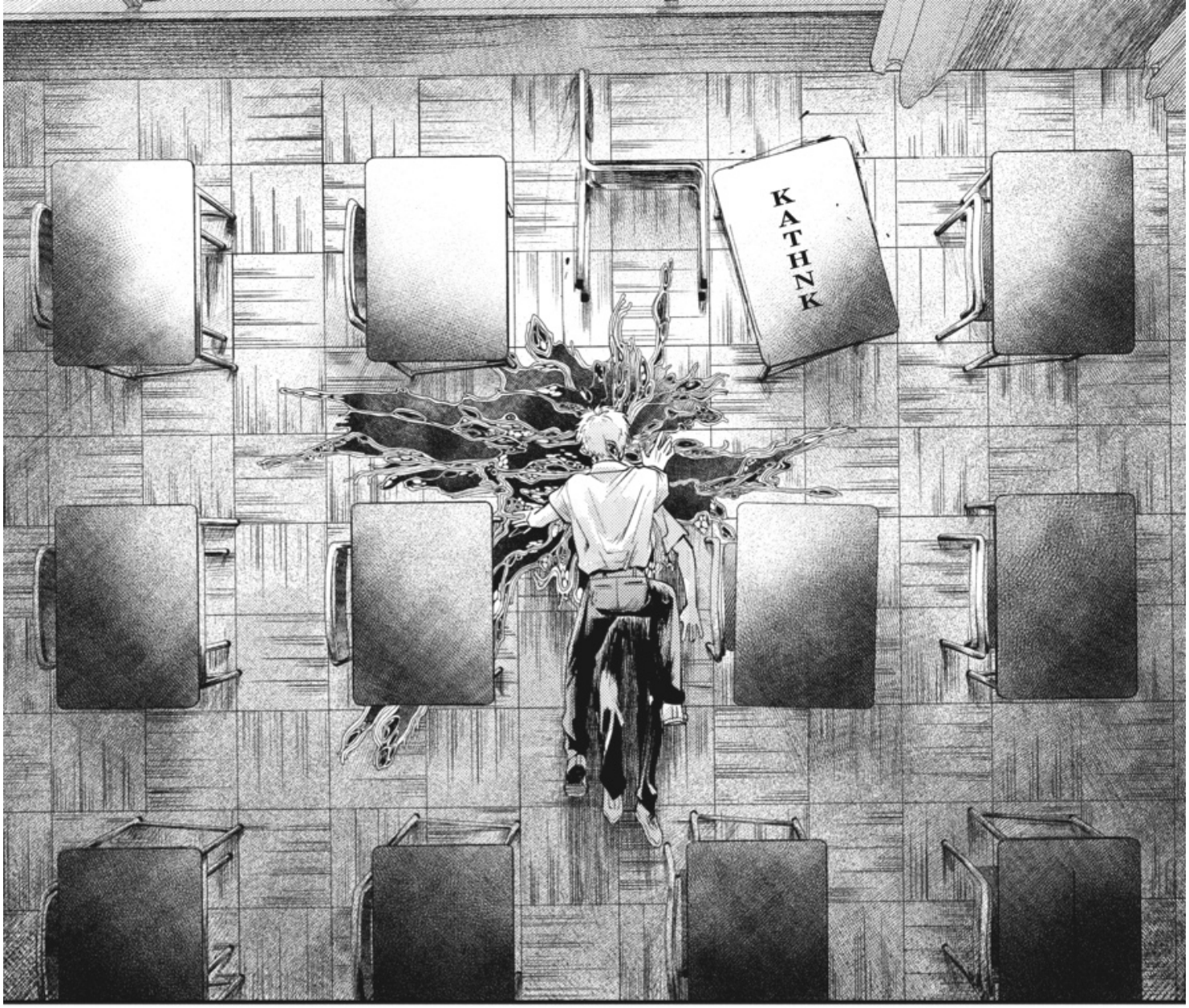

CREAK…

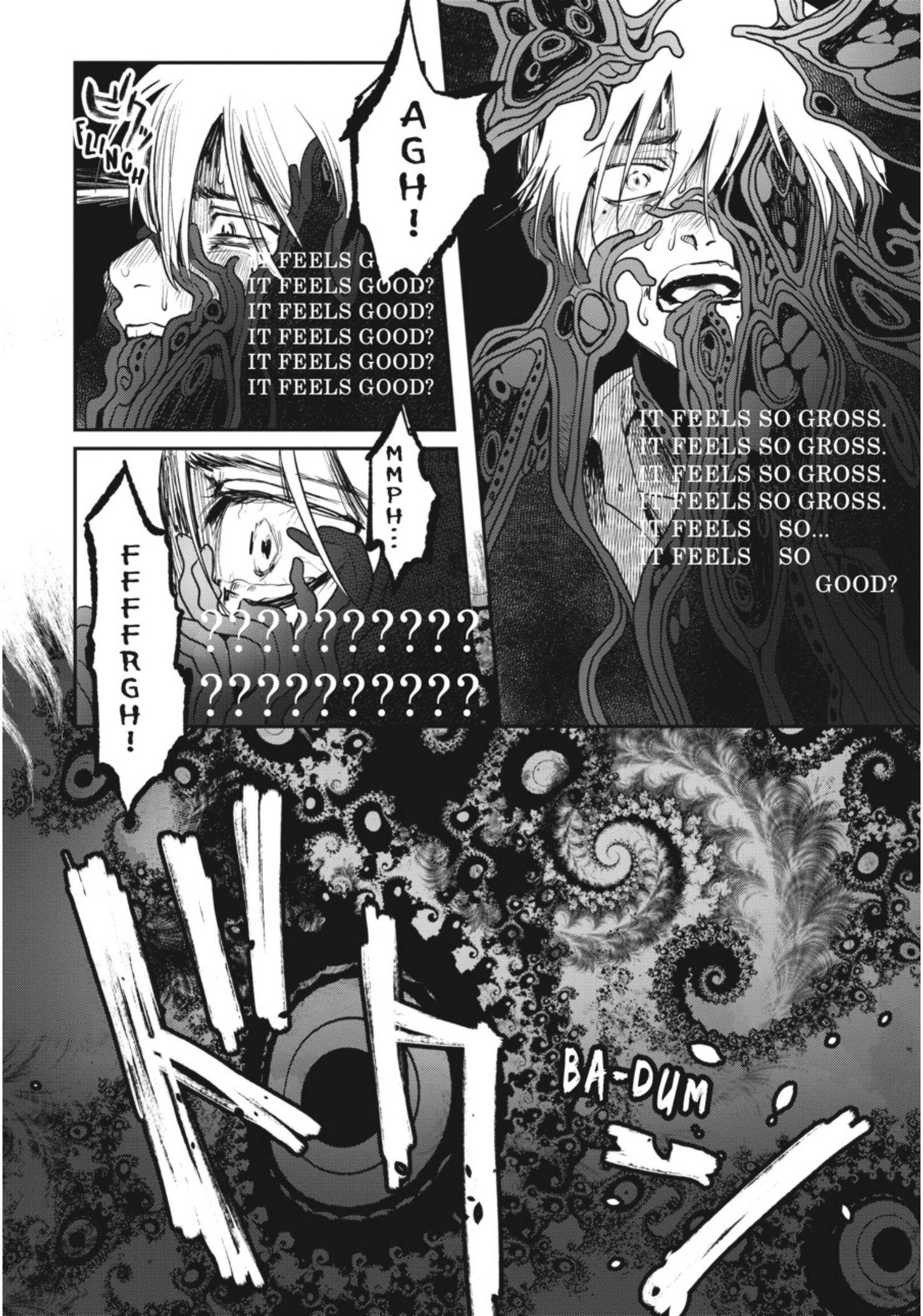
SHH

CREAK…
CREAK…

I LOOK JUST LIKE 'IM, THOUGH...
...ON THE OUTSIDE...
SCRUFF
...EUGH, GROSS...
WHAT-EVER.

AND I CAN'T STOP MY FEELINGS!!!
I KNOW IT AIN'T RIGHT, BUT I STILL LIKE YOU!

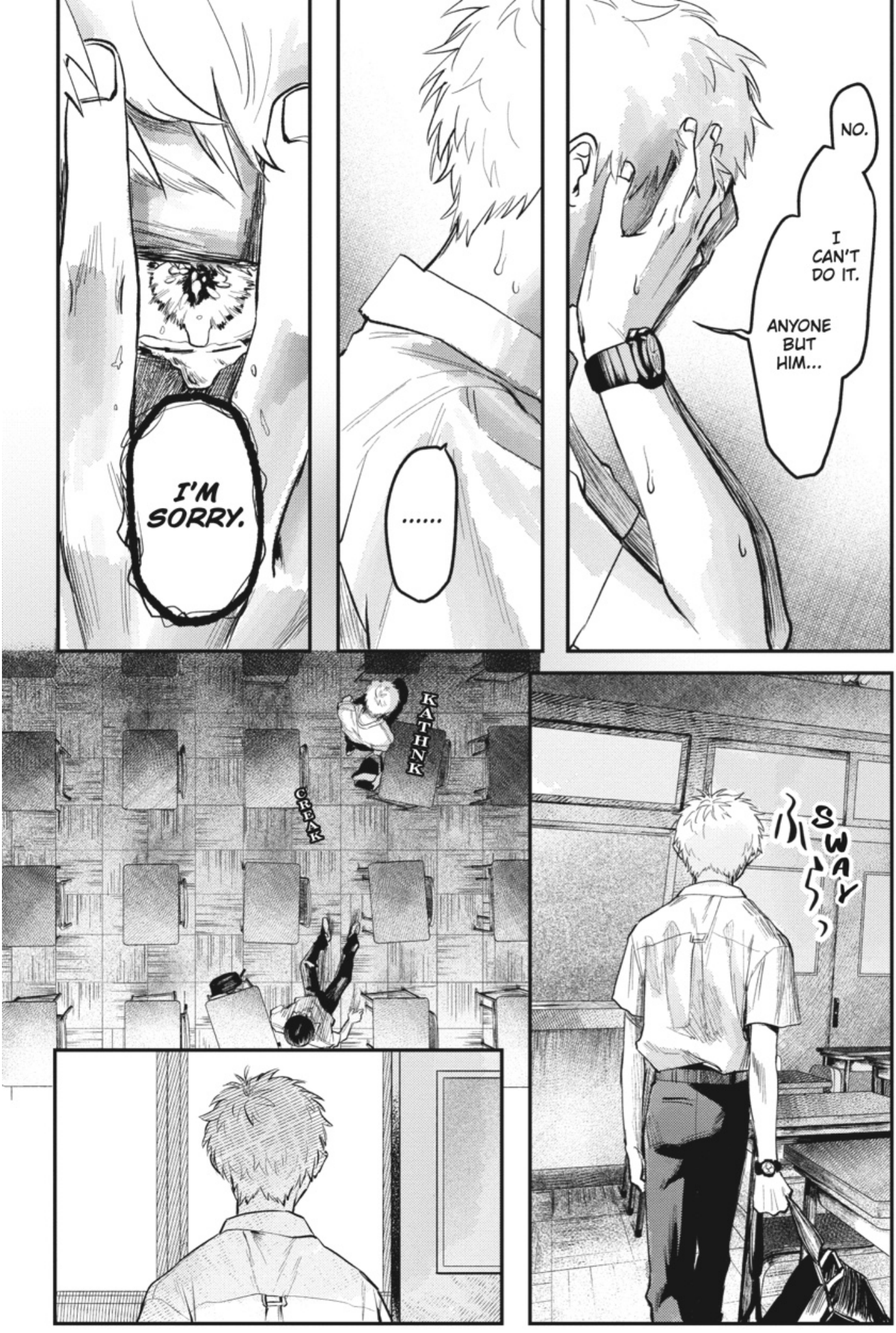

KATHNK


AGH!
FLINCH
IT FEELS G
IT FEELS GOOD?
IT FEELS GOOD?
IT FEELS GOOD?
IT FEELS GOOD?
IT FEELS GOOD?
IT FEELS SO GROSS.
IT FEELS SO GROSS.
IT FEELS SO GROSS.
IT FEELS SO GROSS.
IT FEELS SO...
IT FEELS SO
GOOD?
MMPH...
??????????
??????????
FFFFRGH!
BA-DUM

AH.
WHAT IS THIS?
SOMETHING...
...IS FLOWING...
...INSIDE...
...ME.

IS THAT... SOMEONE'S... HEAD...?
AH!

HI...
HIKA-
RU...
EEUGH!
KOFF!
HGK!
HUFF...
HUFF...


NO.
I CAN'T DO IT.
ANYONE BUT HIM...
.....
I'M SORRY.
SWAY
KATHNK
CREAK

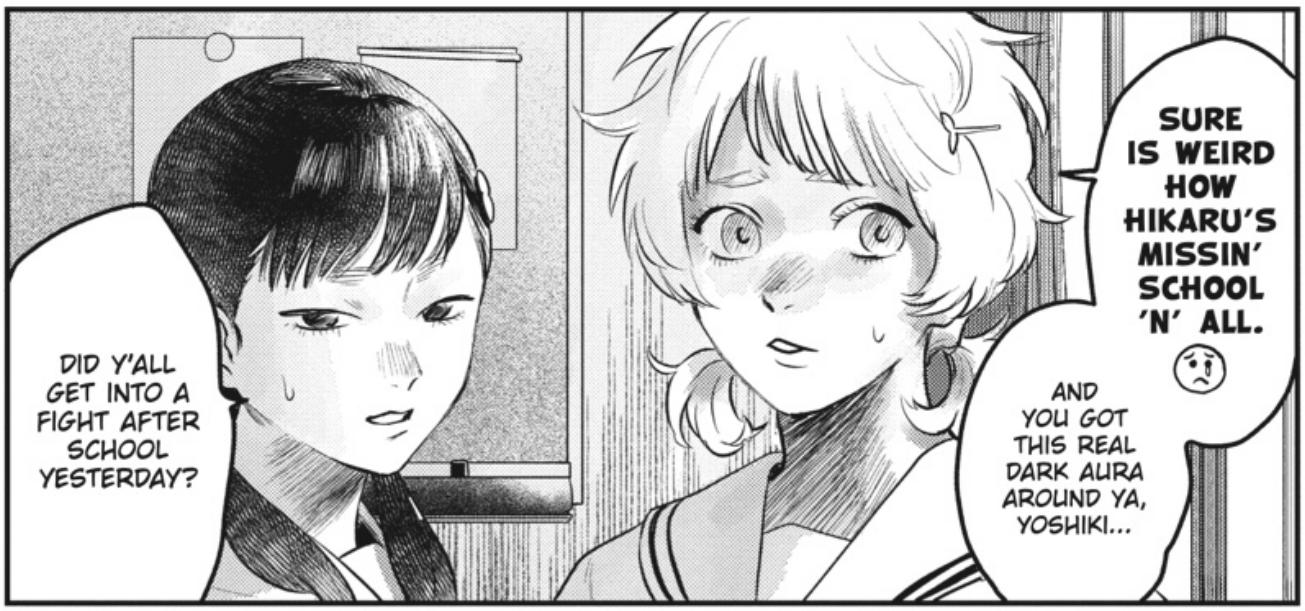
SHUT
ばたん…
DON'T HATE ME...
FSH—
……

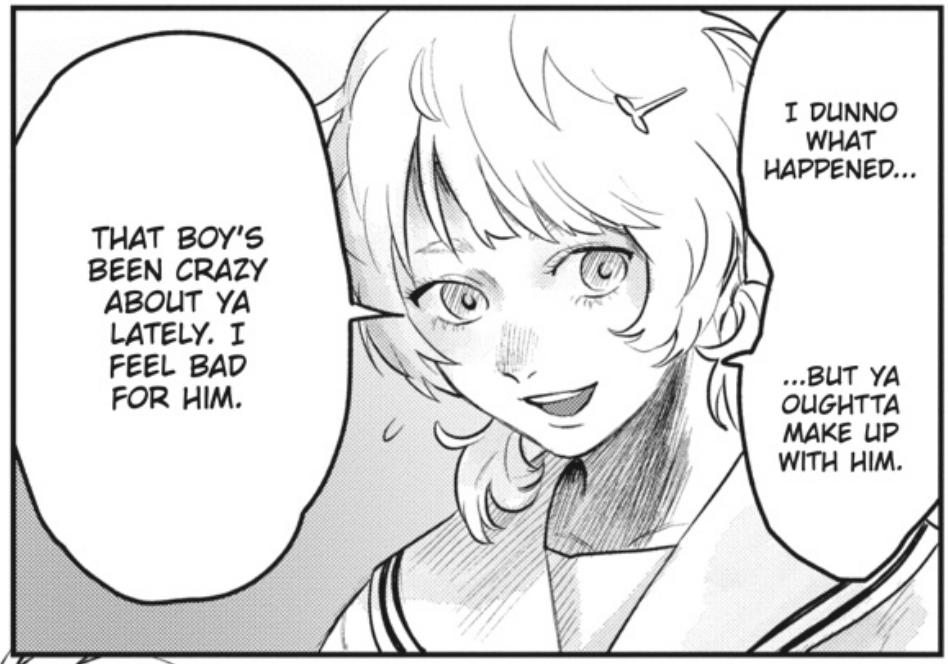
FSH
DING-DONG
DANG-DONG
I'M GONNA HEAD HOME NOW.
BE RIGHT BACK. GOTTA HEAD TO THE TOILET BEFORE CLUB STARTS.
HUH? HOLD UP! WE GOTTA TURN THIS IN TOMOR-ROW!

THAT THING REPLACED HIKARU.
I'M THE WORST. I JUST PRETENDED LIKE THERE WAS NOTHIN' WEIRD ABOUT HIM...
I IGNORED EVERYTHING THAT HAD HAPPENED...

...I CAN'T TREAT IT LIKE IT'S THE REAL HIKARU EITHER.
BUT JUST AS THAT THING CAN'T TOTALLY REPLACE HIKARU...
BEFORE?
...YER SAYIN' THAT LIKE IT WAS YOU BACK THEN.
...BUT YOU'RE NOT HIKARU ...!!!!
THAT'S WHY I SAID ALL THAT...

THIS BRUISE LOOKS BAD... BUT EVEN AFTER ALL THAT... I STILL WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR SOME REASON...
HA HA... IT'S TOTALLY NUMB...
HEY!
SOMETHIN' HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU 'N' HIKARU!?
JOLT


SURE IS WEIRD HOW HIKARU'S MISSIN' SCHOOL 'N' ALL.
AND YOU GOT THIS REAL DARK AURA AROUND YA, YOSHIKI...
DID Y'ALL GET INTO A FIGHT AFTER SCHOOL YESTERDAY?


I DUNNO WHAT HAPPENED...
...BUT YA OUGHTTA MAKE UP WITH HIM.
THAT BOY'S BEEN CRAZY ABOUT YA LATELY. I FEEL BAD FOR HIM.

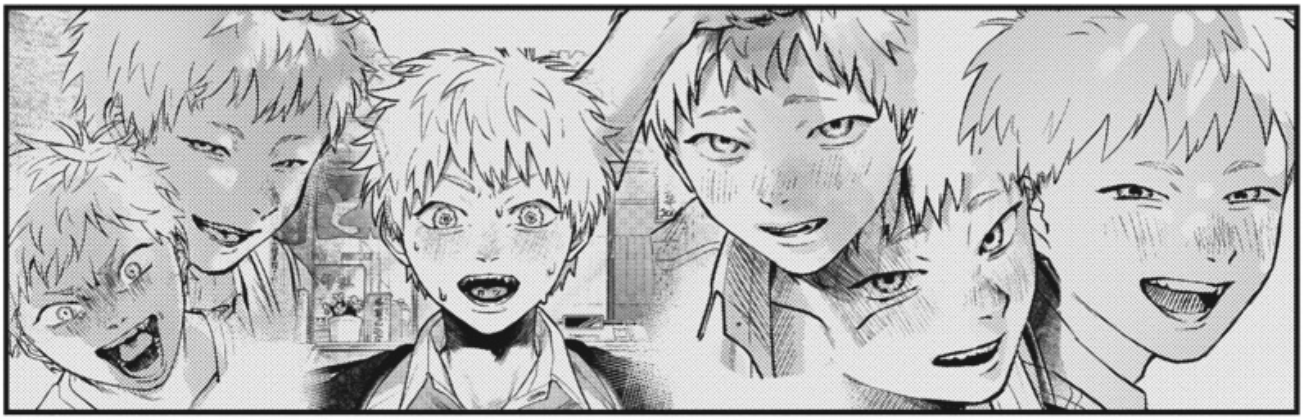
...YEAH.

...HUH?
FOR REAL.
AND...
...I JUST HAVE THIS FEELING IT'S BETTER IF Y'ALL STAYED TOGETHER...
...?

YEAH, IT'S LIKE, HIKARU'S BEEN REAL...
...ATTACHED TO YOU? SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT...
RIGHT!?
LIKE SOME PUNK KID CLINGIN' ON TO HIS MOMMY.
C'MON, NOW! YOU CAN'T BE TALKIN' TRASH LIKE THAT! YOU'VE BEEN WATCHIN' TOO MANY GANGSTER FLICKS!
KYA HA HA HA!

GIRL, I'LL SHOW YOU A WORLD OF PAIN!
I'LL EFF YOU UP SOMETHIN' GOOD! KYA HA!

A KID...



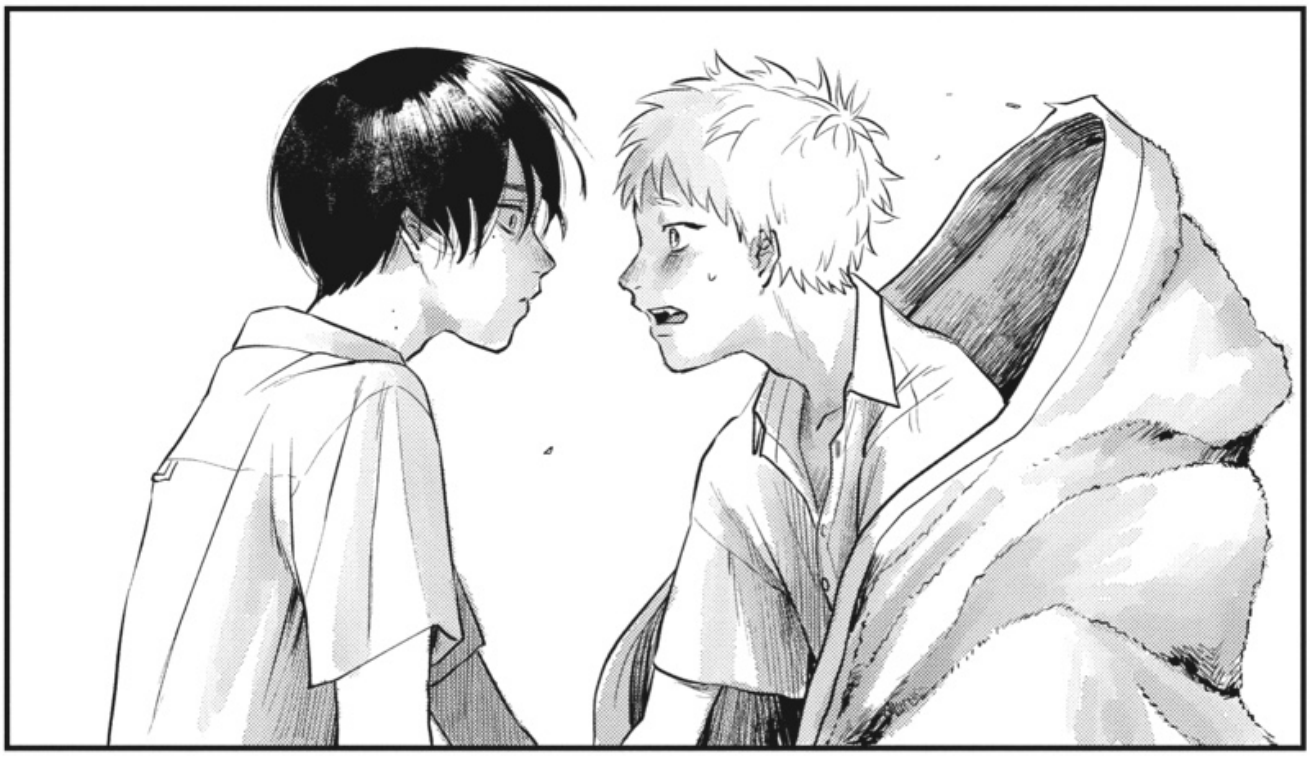
I WANT TO APOLOGIZE ...
I'M GONNA GO.
FWUP
HUH? ALL RIGHT, THEN. SEE YA TOMORROW...

...
HIKARUUU! YOSHIKI'S HERE!

.....
HIKARU...
FWUMP
SORRY 'BOUT YESTER-DAY.
...
WHY'RE YA TELLIN' ME SORRY...?

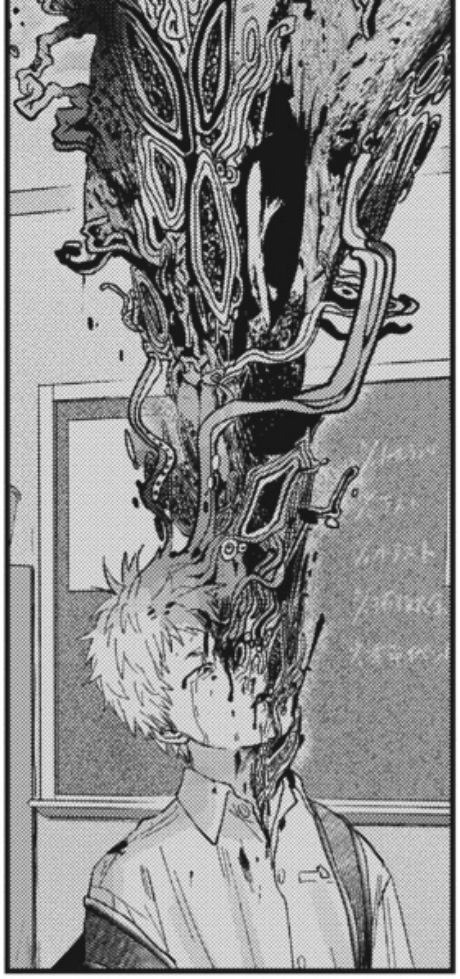
I...
I...
AFTER WHAT I DID TO YA...
WHY?
I'M THE ONE WHO WAS AWFUL...
I... SAID SOME AWFUL THINGS TO YOU... SORRY...
JOLT
IT'S ALL RIGHT...
SST...
N...
NO, I AIN'T SCARED ...
SAY WHAT !?
YER SCARED O' ME, AIN'T YA?
I'M SORRY...
SEE ...!?
YA FLINCHED ...

OH... THAT...? NAW...
IT'S JUST... AFTER WHAT I SAID, I WANTED TO—
I'M SO EMBAR-RASSED ...
LIAR...
I ALREADY SHOWED Y'ALL THAT.
IT WAS JUST...
...DOWN-RIGHT DISGUST-IN'.
...DO YA HATE ME NOW?
... SORRY.
...

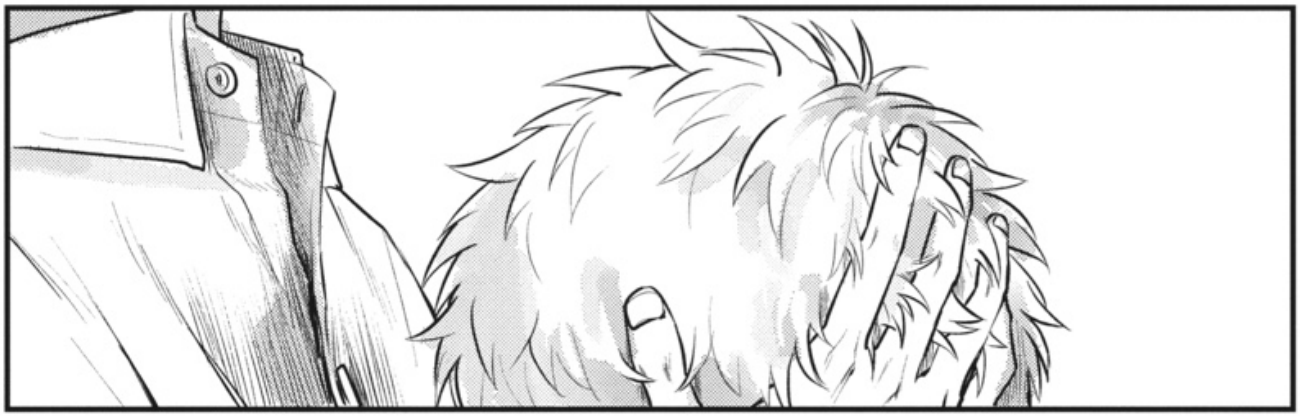


YOSHIKI
...
I...
...
Y'KNOW
...
I WANNA BE NEAR YOU. THAT'S ALL I NEED.

I DON'T CARE WHO YER MEETIN' ANY-MORE!
I JUS' DON'T WANT YA TO HATE ME!
JUST DON'T DO THAT TO ME!!
I KNOW IT'S A LOT AFTER I ALREADY WENT AN' TOOK YER FRIEND'S BODY...
I'M SORRY FOR BEIN' LIKE THIS...

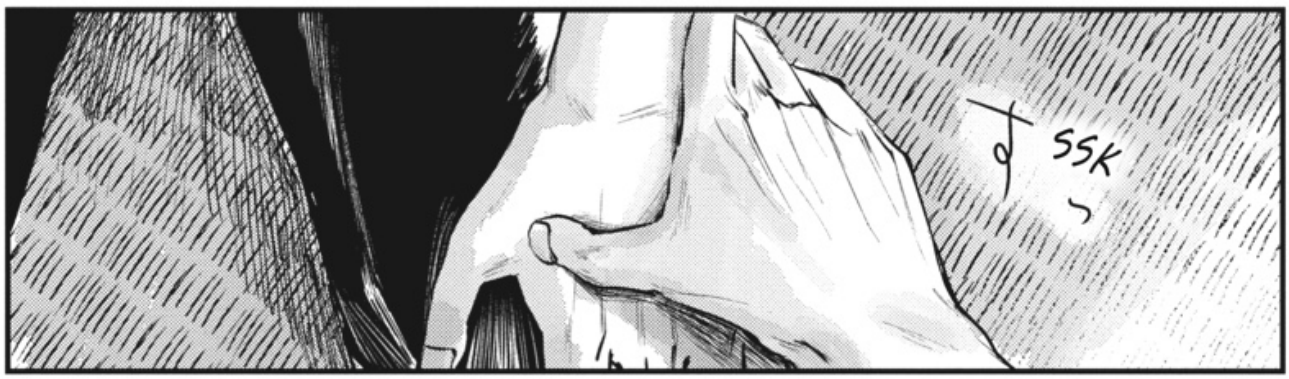


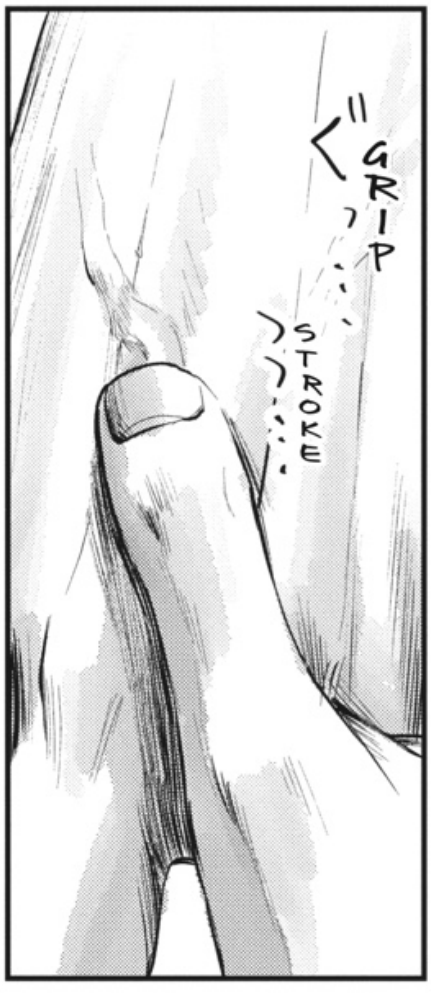
HE'S DANGEROUS.



HE'S DANGEROUS, BUT...

...I KINDA FEEL BAD FOR HIM...


SSK


GRIP
STROKE

YOU'RE EVEN MORE OF A LITTLE KID THAN HIKARU WAS...

DON'T DO IT.
DON'T.
BUT IS IT REALLY JUST 'COS IT'S DANGEROUS?
I KNOW I SHOULDN'T.

HIKARU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW NOTHIN'.
AND IF...
...THAT'S TRUE, THEN...
...YA SURE?
YEAH... YER JUST A LONELY LITTLE KID, AFTER ALL.
LONE-LY...
SO IS THIS WHAT YA CALL BEIN' "LONELY"?
HAVE I ALWAYS BEEN LONELY, THEN?

I'LL HAVE TO TEACH HIM.

CHAPTER 7 END

I WAS PLANNIN' TO GO TO SCHOOL AND GOT AS FAR AS PUTTIN' ON MY UNIFORM AN' EVERYTHIN'...
TEH HEH HEH.

KIBOGAYAMA HIGH'S
(YAMA HIGH'S)
SCHOOL BADGE
APPARENTLY, IT'S INSPIRED BY THE SUNRISE AS SEEN FROM "MOUNT TENBAN," WHICH IS THE SYMBOL OF KIBOGAYAMA TOWN. IT HAS TO DO WITH WANTIN' TO NURTURE SUN-LIKE STUDENTS WHO WILL BRING LIGHT TO A NEW ERA.
WOW, FOR REAL? I THOUGHT IT WAS A CAPYBARA.
OH! YA GOT AN EYELASH ON YER FACE!

C'MON NOW, MINCEYYY!
CHAPTER 8

WHAT'RE YA DOIN'?
...
IS IT MINCE-ANIKI?
DANG IT. HE JUST WON'T COME TO ME.
トクン
PERK
すり
RUB
MROW...

THERE, THERE.
YEP.
HE REALLY HATES YA, HUH, HIKARU?
BUT AT LEAST HE DIDN'T HISS AT ME.
PURR PURR PURR PURR PURR...
THAT'S USUALLY WHAT HE DOES.
...HE GOT ALONG WITH THE OLD HIKARU, HUH?

EEEEEK!
WHOA! HE SCRATCHED ME!
DANG DEVIL CAT!
...NAW.
DIDN'T GET ALONG WITH HIM AT ALL.
OH, S'THAT WHAT HAPPENED?
I DON'T REALLY CARE HOW. I JUST WANNA TOUCH THAT CAT.
YEAH ?
OH, I'VE GOT ONE OF THESE.
MEOW Squeeze Treat
TUNA·BONITO

HEYA, MINCEY! I GOT A SQUEEZE TREAT FOR YA!
HISS...
YOSHIKI!! CHECK IT OUT!! HE ATE IT!
MAYBE HE'LL LEMME TOUCH HIM NOW!?
LICK LICK LICK LICK LICK
SLURP SLURP SLURP SLURP
TUNA-BONITO
Cat
MEOW's

POKE
ZOOM!
AH.
AWW, MAN!
THAT'S SOME WAY TO TOUCH HIM...

HAAH... I'M REALLY...
.....
REALLY WHAT?
HRMM...
NAW, IT'S JUST...
I JUST FEEL LIKE I'M SO DUMB ON ACCOUNT OF NOT KNOWIN' WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND ME.
THAT'S HOW IT WAS WITH WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE...
AND...
...I WISH THAT CREEPY STUFF WOULD STOP COMIN' OUTTA ME WHEN I GET ALL SHOOK UP.
.....

WELL... HIKARU MAY BE KINDA CHILDISH...
...BUT HE'S TRYIN' TO GROW IN HIS OWN WAY.

WHAT THE HECK'S GONNA HAPPEN FROM HERE ON OUT?
RIE WAS SAYIN' THINGS'LL GET SCREWY, BUT...

AH!
LOOKIT MINCE-ANIKI! HE'S POOPIN'! AH-HA-HA-HA!
WHAT DO I DO WITH A GUY LIKE HIM?

FLIP...
FLIP...
FLIP...
FLIP...
So that's your idea about it, right?
What you're saying doesn't really make sense. Okay?
RUSTLE
YOU GONNA HAVE SUPPER HERE TONIGHT?

NAH...
MY MAMA'S MAKIN' SALISBURY STEAK TONIGHT...
RIGHT AFTER I FINISH READIN' THIS...
HMM ...
THAT RIGHT? WELL THEN, SHOULDN'T YOU BE HEADIN' HOME?
WOULD YOU GIVE IT A REST!?

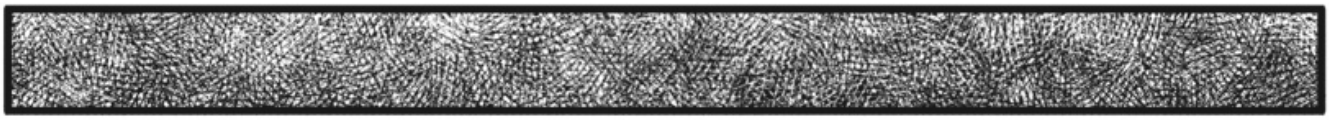
GO YOURSELF AND ASK HER TO DO IT FOR YOU!
I'M NO GOOD AT THAT FIDDLY STUFF— NO WAY I CAN DO IT!
YOU DO IT, MOM...
YOU'LL HAVE TO GO TO AUNTIE MIKASA'S TO GET IT LET DOWN!
MOMMM! I WANNA WEAR A YUKATA!
WELL, YOU GOT TALLER, SO THE ONE YOU HAVE DOESN'T FIT ANYMORE, RIGHT!?

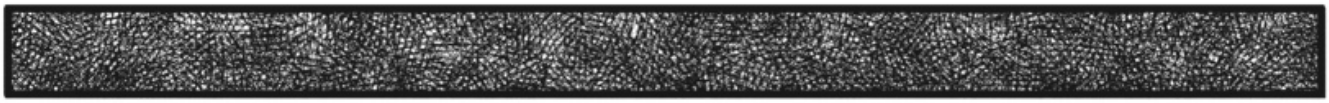
...
WHAT'S UP WITH KAORU?
AHH, SHE WANTS TO WEAR A YUKATA TO THIS YEAR'S SUMMER FESTIVAL.
PIPE DOWN!
OH... THAT'S RIGHT !!!
THE SUM-MER FESTI-VAL!

I CAN HARDLY WAIT!
MMM, SHAVED ICE AND ALL SORTS OF STUFF...
I BET THEY'LL HAVE ALL KINDS OF FOOD AGAIN THIS YEAR!

HEH.

I'M REALLY LOOKIN' FOR-WARD TO IT.
LET'S YOU AND ME GO WITH KAORU— ALL THREE OF US.



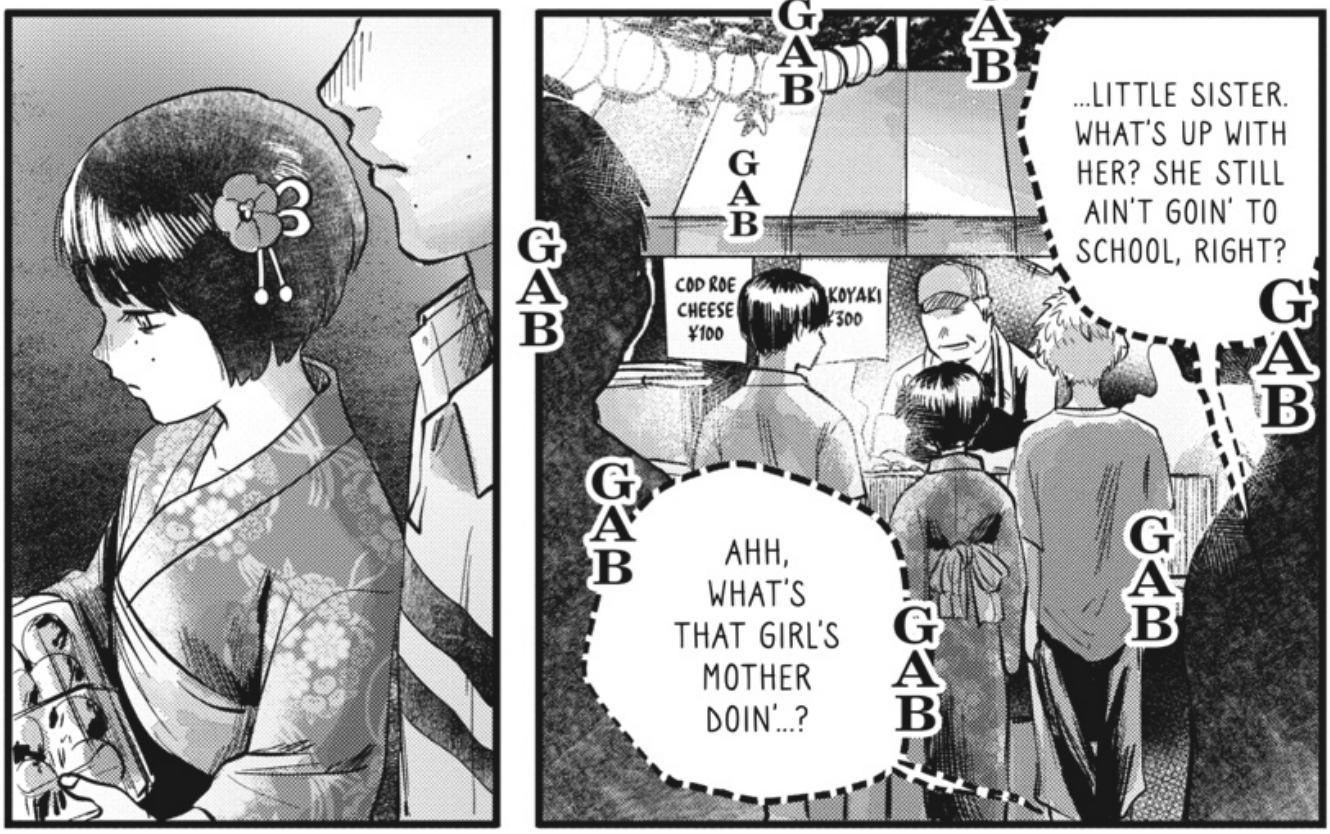


GAB
GAB
GAB
GAB
GAB
GAB
GAB
GAB
YER FEET AIN'T HURTIN', KAORU?
I'M FINE.
GOOD THING I MADE YOU WEAR SNEAKERS, RIGHT?
DRAFT BEER
EDAMAME
THAT'S NICE, HUH?
HEEEY, YOU KIDS THERE !!
OH MY! IS THAT KAORU-CHAN!? THAT YUKATA LOOKS DARLIN' ON YA!

HAVE SOME TAKOYAKI!
TAKOYAKI ¥300
ジュウウウ SIZZLE
WOW! THANKS A LOT!
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
GAB
YEAH, I'M SURE!
KIDS EAT FOR FREE! IT'S HOT, SO BE CAREFUL EATIN' IT!
GAB
MR. KAMEYAMA'S REALLY DOIN' US A KINDNESS HERE.
YOU OUGHTTA SAY THANKS TOO, KAORU.
TH-TH-THANKS...
GAB

MASA! CAN YA GO AN' GET SOME MORE OIL!?
TECCHAN'S BRINGIN' SOME OVER NOW...

GAB
GAB
GAB
OH... THAT'S TSUJI-NAKA'S...


GAB
...LITTLE SISTER. WHAT'S UP WITH HER? SHE STILL AIN'T GOIN' TO SCHOOL, RIGHT?
COD ROE CHEESE ¥100
KOYAKI ¥300
AHH, WHAT'S THAT GIRL'S MOTHER DOIN'...?

HEY!
DON'T YOU WANNA GET SOME SHAVED ICE?
WHERE CAN I GET SOME AGAIN?
IT'S AROUND THE SHRINE GROUNDS...
RIGHT. LET'S GO.

I THINK YAKISOBA AN' STUFF...?
BZZT
WHAT ELSE DO THEY HAVE ON THE SHRINE GROUNDS AGAIN?
WHAT ...?

AH... SORRY.
GOTTA USE THE TOILET.
GO AHEAD AND BUY SOME FOR ME.
OH, ALL RIGHT...?
GOT IT.
I GOT BOUNCED BACK...

...WHO SET THAT THERE?
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS...

HERE'S YOUR SHAVED ICE.
SHE WENT TO GET SOME MONEY FROM OUR MOM TO BUY PICKLED CUCUMBERS.
AWE-SOME! THANKS!
YOSHIKI ...
HUH? WHERE'D KAORU GO?
...BUT WHAT KINDA FLAVOR IS "BLUE HAWAII" S'POSED TO BE?
I DON'T THINK IT'S A FLAVOR AT ALL.
APPARENTLY, ALL SHAVED ICE FLAVORS TASTE THE SAME.
I'VE BEEN WONDERIN' 'BOUT THIS FOR A WHILE NOW...

JUST CHANGIN' THE COLOR'S ENOUGH FOR PEOPLE TO FEEL LIKE IT TASTES DIFFERENT.
FOR REAL...!?
WHA —!?
THEN... HOW ABOUT ME?

IF SOME-THIN' LOOKS THE SAME AS ANOTH-ER...
...CAN IT FEEL THE SAME TOO?
...NO WAY.
THE REAL HIKARU NEVER MADE FACES LIKE THAT.

...OH, I SEE.
WONDER WHY THAT IS.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE HAPPY TO HEAR THAT.
HUH...? DO I?
HEY!
YOU'RE ALREADY DONE EATIN'?
AH, DANG, I'M ALL EMBARRASSED NOW!

HMM. SO...
SO THEN, YOSHIKI...
WHAT'S UP?
IS THAT HOW YOU FIGURED I WASN'T THE REAL HIKARU?

...NO.

I...

...SAW HIKARU'S BODY.
CHAPTER 8 END

RED
BLUE

!!
THAT'S DAMN TASTY!
BUT I GET THE FEELIN' THIS THING'S SCORCHIN' HOT...

CHAPTER 9
DON'T YOU DARE EVEN THINK ABOUT GOING OUT THERE TO LOOK FOR HIM!
PLEASE! JUST STAY HOME...!!

FISH
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

FSH
NII-CHAN...
WHERE YA GOIN'?
I'M GONNA CHECK SOMETHING OUT A SEC.

TMP
トン
TMP
トン
LIAR.
THE GROWN-UPS ARE OUT SEARCHING FOR HIM, SO THE KIDS SHOULD STAY HOME.
THAT'S WHAT MOM SAID.
FISH
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
...YOU BETTER.
COME RIGHT BACK, OKAY?

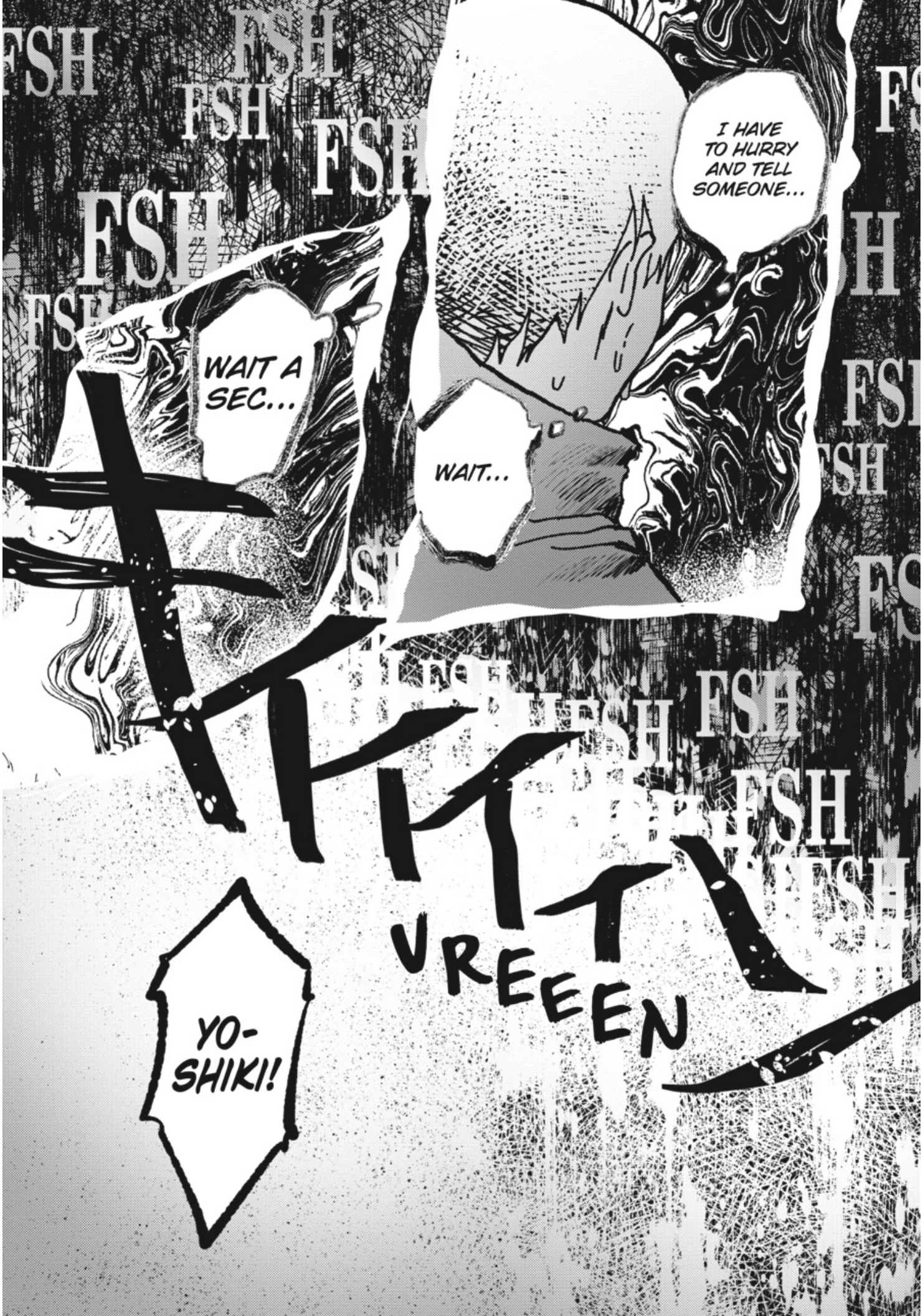
SHFF
SHFF
SHFF
SHFF
SHFF
SHFF
HEY!
THAT HIM?

HAAH!
HAFF!
HUFF!
HAFF!

FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
SHIT...
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
FSH
HIKARU!

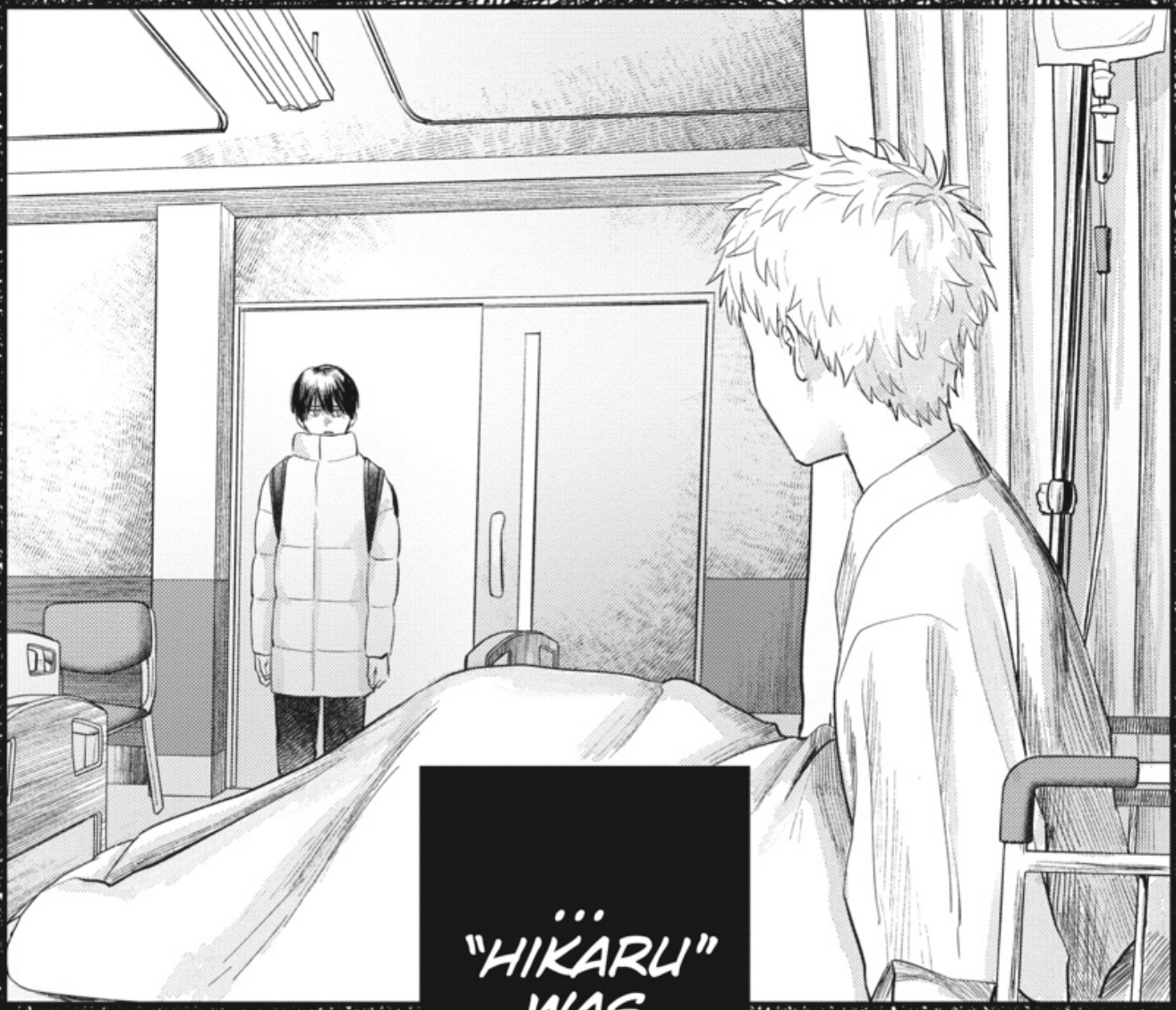
HE'S NOT BREATHING.
HE'S COLD.
A ROCK?

...
...HIS BODY'S IN SURPRISINGLY GOOD CONDITION.
WONDER WHY THAT IS.
OH, THAT'S RIGHT... 'COS IT'S WINTER.
FSH


I HAVE TO HURRY AND TELL SOMEONE...
WAIT A SEC...
WAIT...
VREEEN
YO-SHIKI!

THE FIRE BRIGADE... THEY'RE DOING THEIR BEST TO SEARCH FOR HIM.
SO IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT...!

AH...
YOSHIKI !?
YOU'RE BURNING UP...!
I WAS IN BED FOR A FEW DAYS AFTER THAT.
AND WHEN I WOKE UP...



...
"HIKARU" WAS BACK.

.....
THERE WERE A BUNCHA TIMES WHEN I THOUGHT IT WAS A DREAM.
BUT IT WAS ALL REAL.
THERE WERE LOTS OF OTHER ODD THINGS ABOUT YOU...
...BUT NORMALLY... THAT WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH TO THINK YA WERE SOMEONE ELSE.

...OH, WOW.
THAT'S NUTS...
I WAS PROB'LY ALREADY LIKE THIS WHEN YOU FOUND 'IM.
BUT I RECKON IT TOOK A FEW DAYS FOR ME TO REPAIR HIS BODY...
...SO YOU MUSTA COME IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THAT.
IT'S WHY I'VE BEEN HAVIN' TROUBLE SLEEPIN'.
AND YOU'VE BEEN HOLDIN' ON TO THIS FOR SIX MONTHS?

AHH...
I MISS HIKARU...
ZSHHH

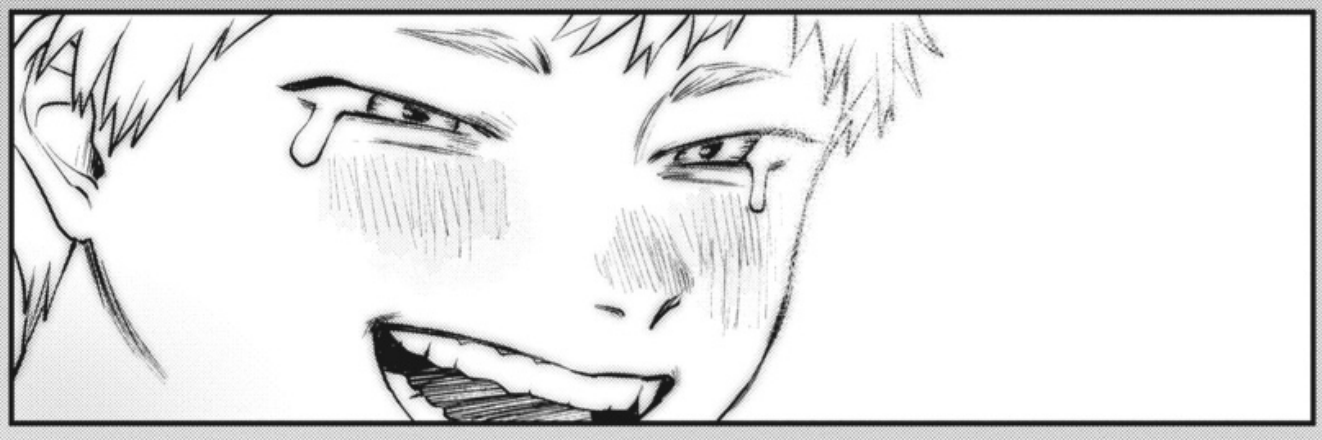
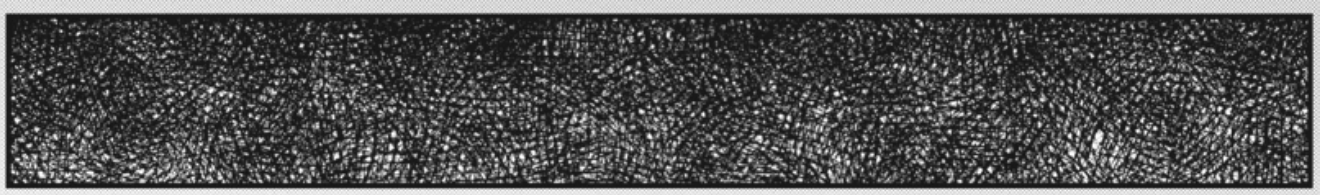
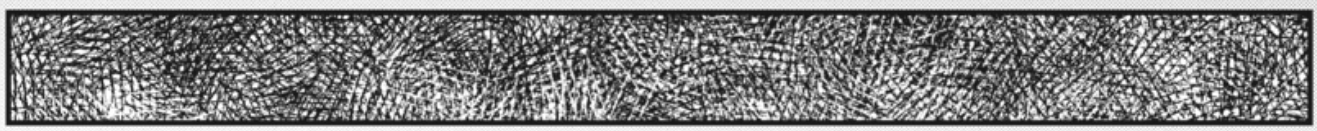
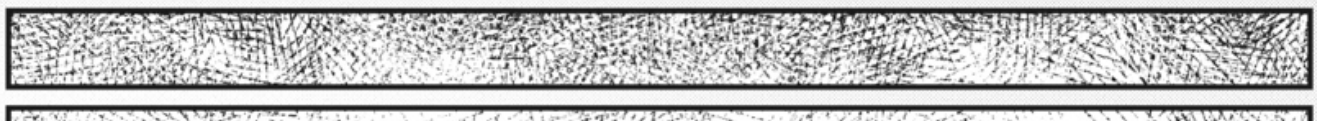
I SERIOUSLY CAN'T WAIT TO MOVE OUT.
THE COUNTRY SUCKS.
WHAAA? WHY D'YA WANNA GO TO THE CITY SO BADLY?

WHY DO PEOPLE 'ROUND HERE...
...GOTTA PRY INTO MY FAMILY'S BUSINESS SO MUCH?
HA HA HA!
OHH, SO YER FOLKS'RE STILL FIGHTIN'?
MY PARENTS... DON'T GET ALONG, AND THEY FIGHT JUST ABOUT EVERY DAY.
BUT FOLKS LIKE YASABUROU'S GRANNY'RE ALWAYS TALKIN' ABOUT IT, LIKE THEY WANT US TO HEAR 'EM...
SPEAKIN' OF, THERE WAS A BIG FIGHT AT YASABUROU'S PLACE NOT LONG AGO. SOMETHIN' ABOUT THEIR NEXT-IN-LINE, YUUSUKE-KUN.
THEY WERE SAYIN' HE'S SICK...
YUUSUKE-KUN AIN'T SICK.
HE'S A HOMOSEXUAL.
HOME-O-SEX-YOU-ALL?

I DUNNO...
ポチャ
SPLASH
...THIS VILLAGE IS TOO SMALL AND CRAMPED.
I CAN BARELY BREATHE WITH HOW CRAMPED IT IS HERE...
ALL RIGHT...
...THEN YOU CAN SLEEP OVER AT MY PLACE TONIGHT.

EVEN IF THE COUNTRY SUCKS, YOU ALWAYS HAVE FUN AT MY PLACE.
WHENEVER YA FEEL LIKE YOU WANNA GO TO THE CITY, YOU SHOULD COME TO MY PLACE!

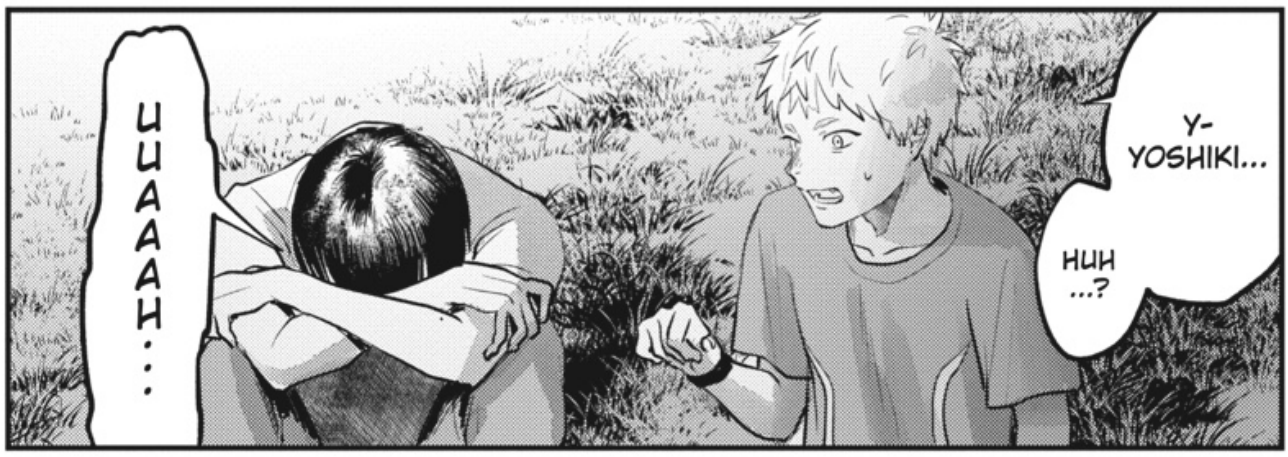
.....
AH!
CHECK IT OUT, YOSHIKI!

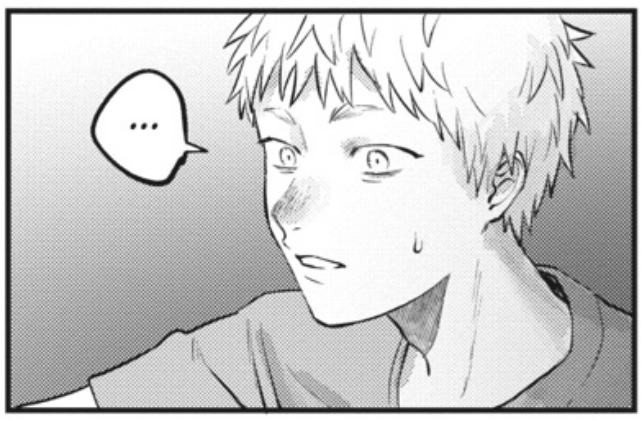
CRABBY
CRAB!!
CRAB!!
CRAB!!





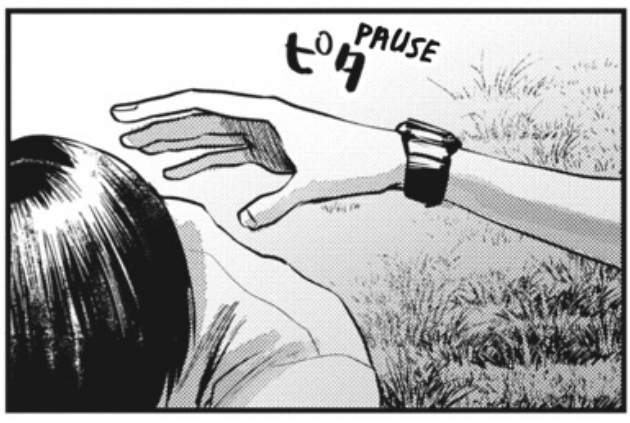
YOSHIKI
?

...
AH,
DANG
IT...

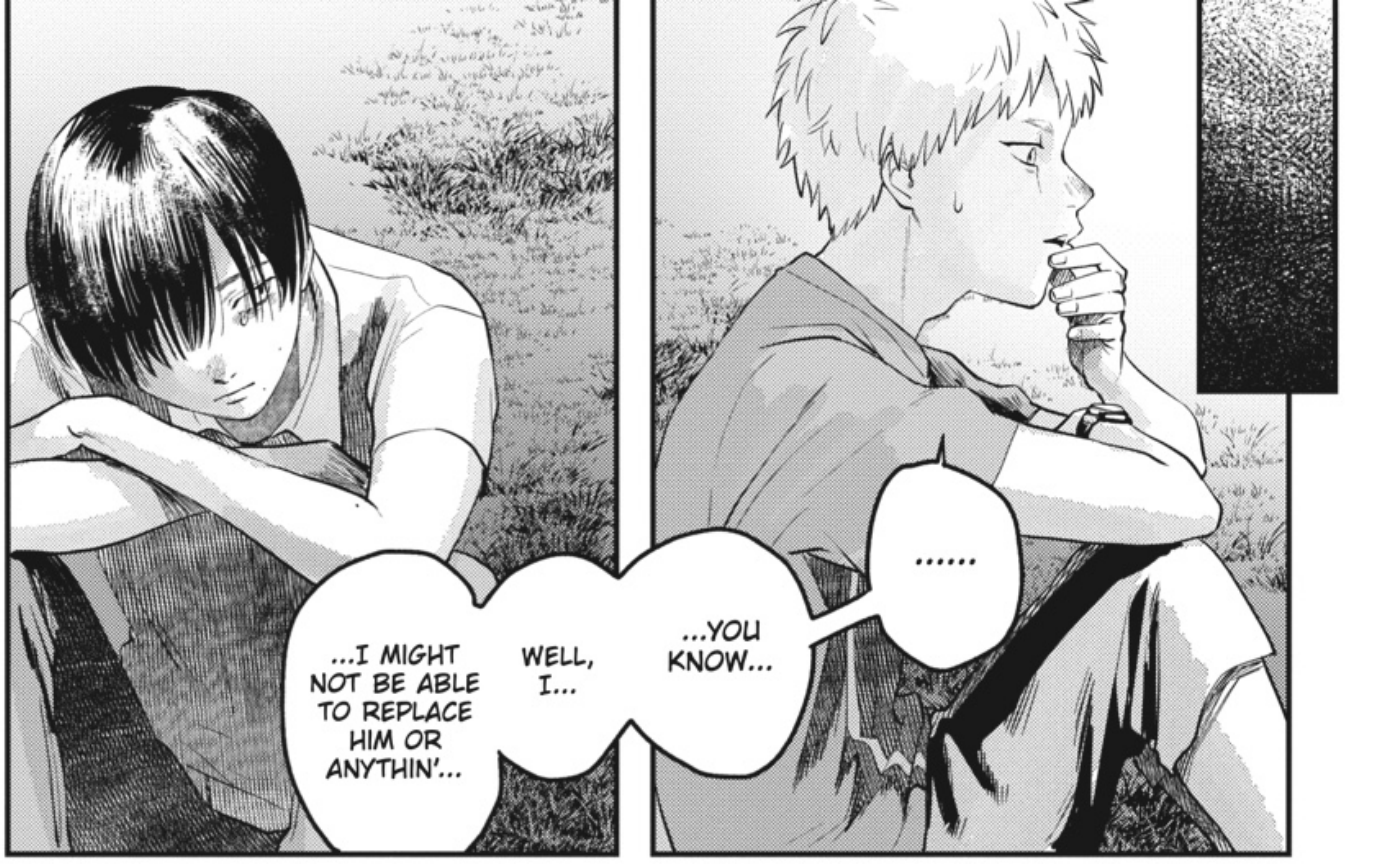
WHY'D YOU HAVE TO GO AN' DIE...?
UNNNGH...

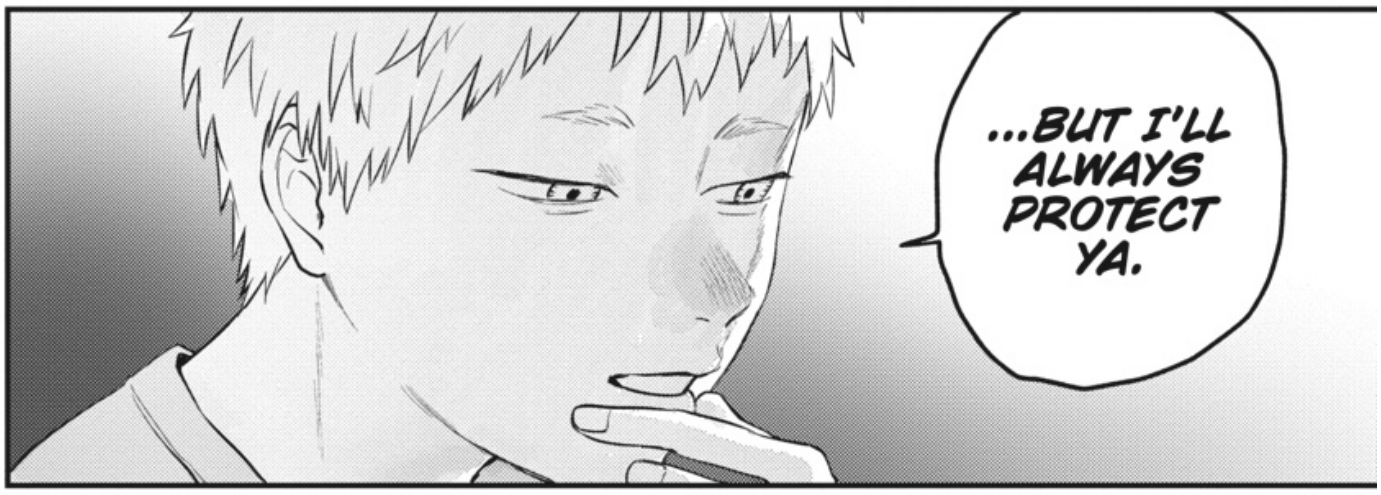

Y-YOSHIKI...
HUH ...?
UUAAAH...

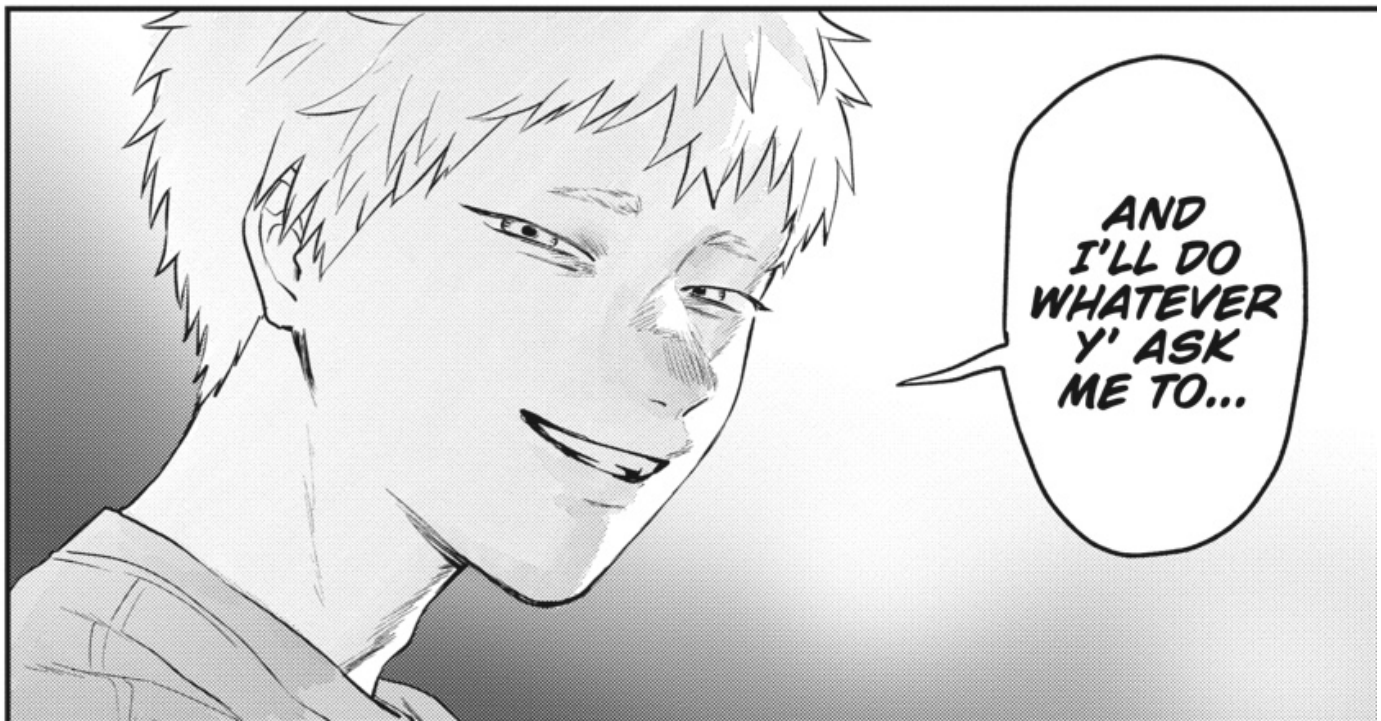

...


PAUSE

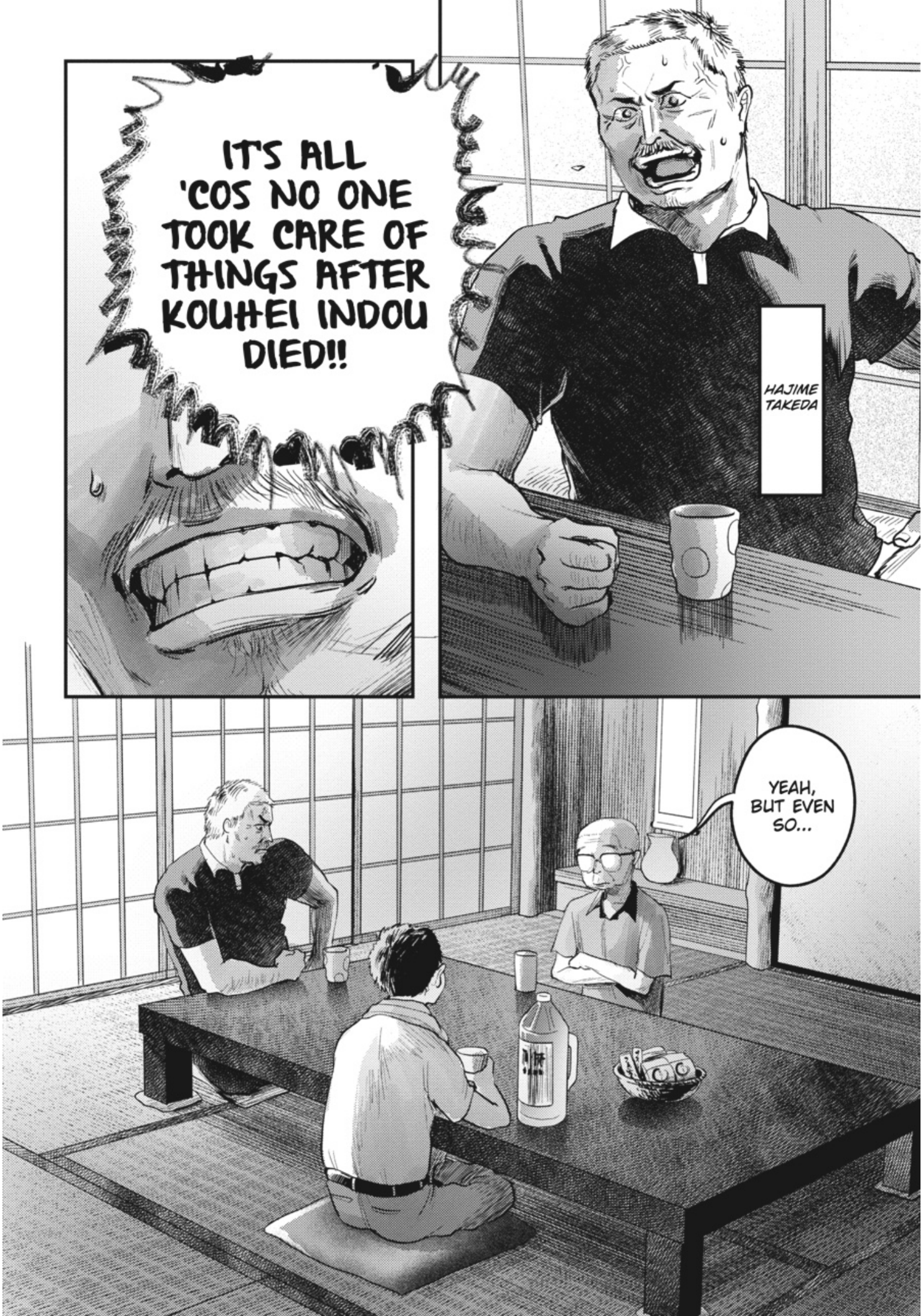
I...
I'LL...
...BE RIGHT BACK...
GRAB
UUUUNH...
GHHHH...


.....
...YOU KNOW...
WELL, I...
...I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO REPLACE HIM OR ANYTHIN'...


...BUT I'LL ALWAYS PROTECT YA.


AND I'LL DO WHATEVER Y' ASK ME TO...

THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYIN'!
BAM


IT'S ALL 'COS NO ONE TOOK CARE OF THINGS AFTER KOUHEI INDOU DIED!!
HAJIME TAKEDA
YEAH, BUT EVEN SO...

...TAKIN' CARE OF IT FELL UNDER THE INDOUS' JURISDICTION, SO NO ONE KNOWS MUCH ABOUT IT.
KOUHEI'S SON WENT MISSIN' FOR OVER A WEEK...
HE CAME BACK, BUT HE PROB'LY DIDN'T COMPLETE THE RITUAL.
TETSU MIKASA

GULP
HEY! HOW CAN YOU BE DRINKIN' AT A TIME LIKE THIS ...!?
YER A REAL JERK, YA KNOW THAT!?
...SO MAYBE THAT TIME'S FINALLY COME!?
KOUHEI USED TO SAY THIS SORTA THING COULDN'T GO ON FOR-EVER...

AND WAS THERE REALLY EVEN ANYTHIN' UP THERE IN THEM MOUNTAINS?
DID THAT THING ACTUALLY EVER EXIST IN THE FIRST PLACE?
AH, C'MON... HA-HA! I'LL BE DRINKIN' HIGHBALLS TILL THE DAY I MEET MY MAKER!
YOSHI-HIKO MATSU-SHIMA
IT'S THE DUTY OF THIS LAND'S PEOPLE TO KEEP IT TRAPPED HERE FOREVER.
IF WE DON'T DO ANYTHIN', MATSUURA WON'T BE THE ONLY ONE TO WORRY 'BOUT—THE ENTIRE VILLAGE'LL BE IN A HEAP OF TROUBLE...
YA DANG FOOL !!
THAT THING... IS KUBITACHI'S "BURDEN," ONE THAT'S BEEN PASSED DOWN SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.
HAJIME, THINK WE OUGHTTA GIVE "TANAKA" A CALL?

I REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO, BUT I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE...
I ALREADY DID...

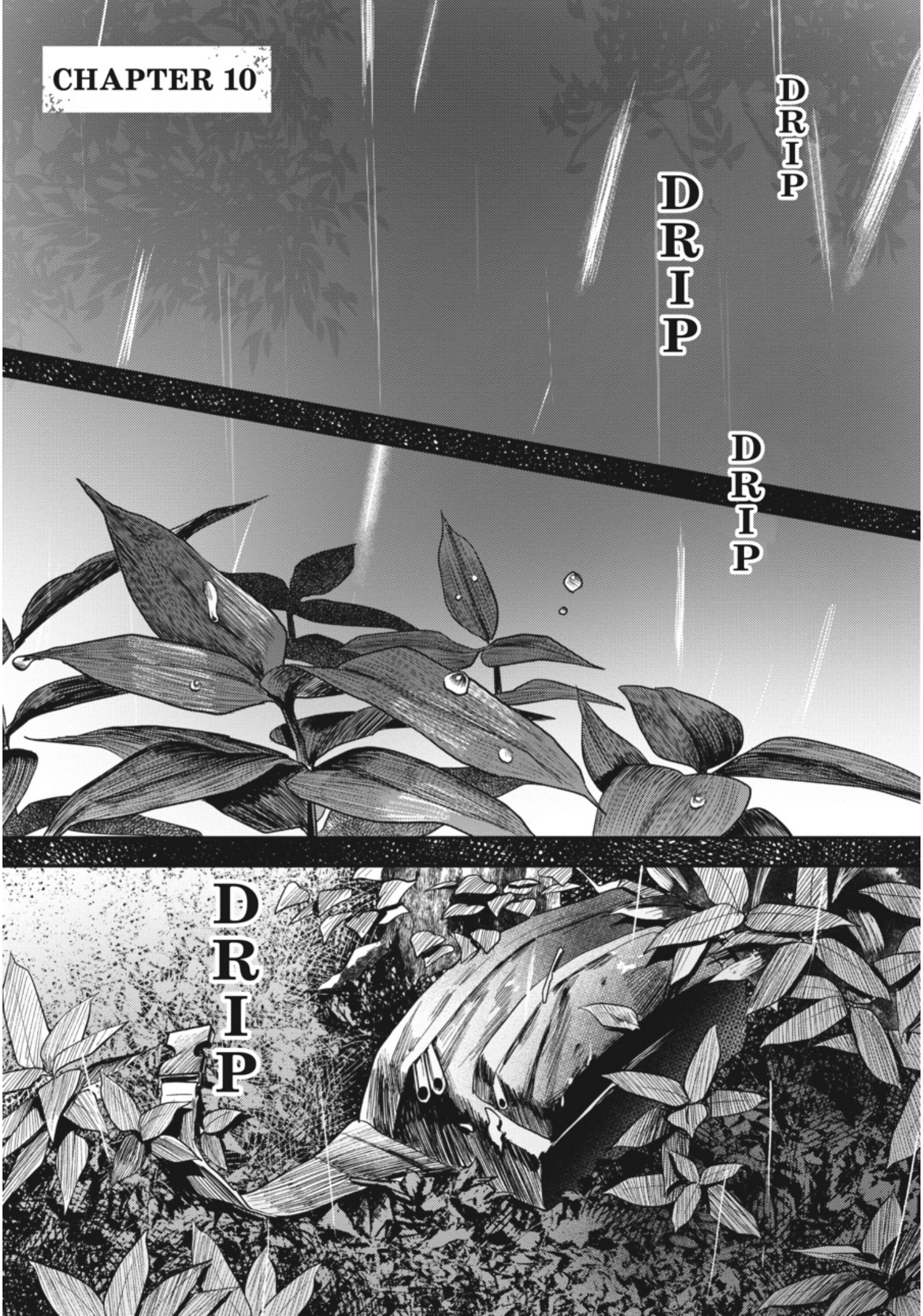
TAK TAK
TAK TAK

AHH, MAN.
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS...
UGH, I REALLY DON'T WANNA GO. THAT KUBITACHI PLACE IS GLOOMY AS HELL...
BUT...

...DEALING WITH *THAT* THING...
...WON'T BE AS EASY AS THOSE VILLAGERS THINK...

FZZT
CHAPTER 9 END

HIKARU'S
BIRTHDAY
IS 3/20.

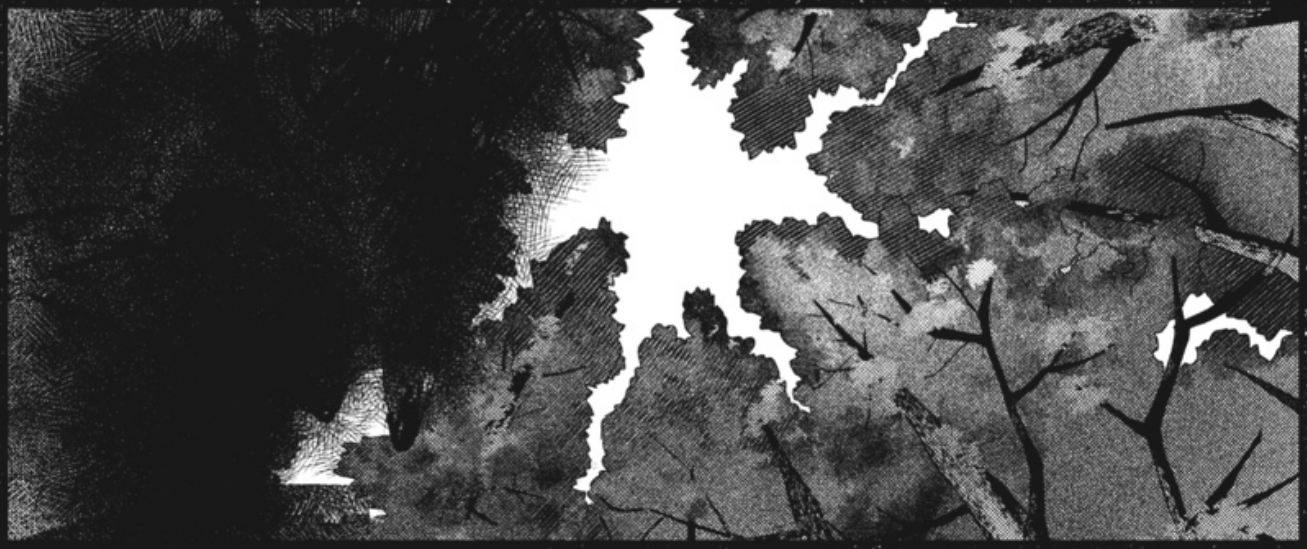

CHAPTER 10
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP

AHH...

REALLY?
I'M GONNA DIE.
AND I CAN'T FEEL NOTHIN'.
I MEAN, MY BODY'S BUSTED UP ALL OVER.
THE HELL WAS THAT? JUS' PLAIN STUPID. WHAT A WAY TO GO OUT...
WHOA! THAT'S A SEXY TREE!
CAN'T BELIEVE I SLIPPED GETTIN' DISTRACTED BY A TREE THAT LOOKED LIKE A WOMAN'S BODY...

SORRY, DADDY... I PROB'LY CAN'T CARRY OUT OUR FAMILY'S DUTIES LIKE I WAS S'POSED TO.
AN' I DIDN'T WANNA MAKE YOU SUFFER AGAIN, MAMA...
.....
...IT'D BE GREAT IF NO ONE GOT SAD ABOUT THIS...
...HE'LL BE ALONE...
...IF I DIE...

I DON'T WANNA LEAVE YOU ALONE...



WHAT WAS THAT...? I CAN'T REALLY SEE WITH ALL THE BLOOD...
...ANYONE WILL DO...
SERIOUSLY, AT THIS POINT...
IS THAT UNUKI-SAMA...
...OR SOMETHING?

TAKE...
...MY PLACE...
... AND ...
...STAY...
...BY...
...HIS...
...SIDE...
...

KCHAK
カチャ
MURMUR
FZSHH
ザー
KCHNK
カチャン
KCHAK
カチャ
MURMUR

IT'S STILL NOT DONE, THOUGH.
HURRY UP, YOSHIKI!!
AH, YEAH... SORRY.
YAHOO!!
I LOOOVE FRIED CHICKEN !!

AH!
CHOMP
CHOMP
OHH MAN, OH MAN, OH MAN!!
HEY! WHADDAYA THINK YOU'RE EATIN'!?

WHAT!? EW, NO!!
Y' AIN'T EVEN HELPED OUT NONE!

AH, SHUT UP! YOU MY MAMA OR SOMETHIN'!?

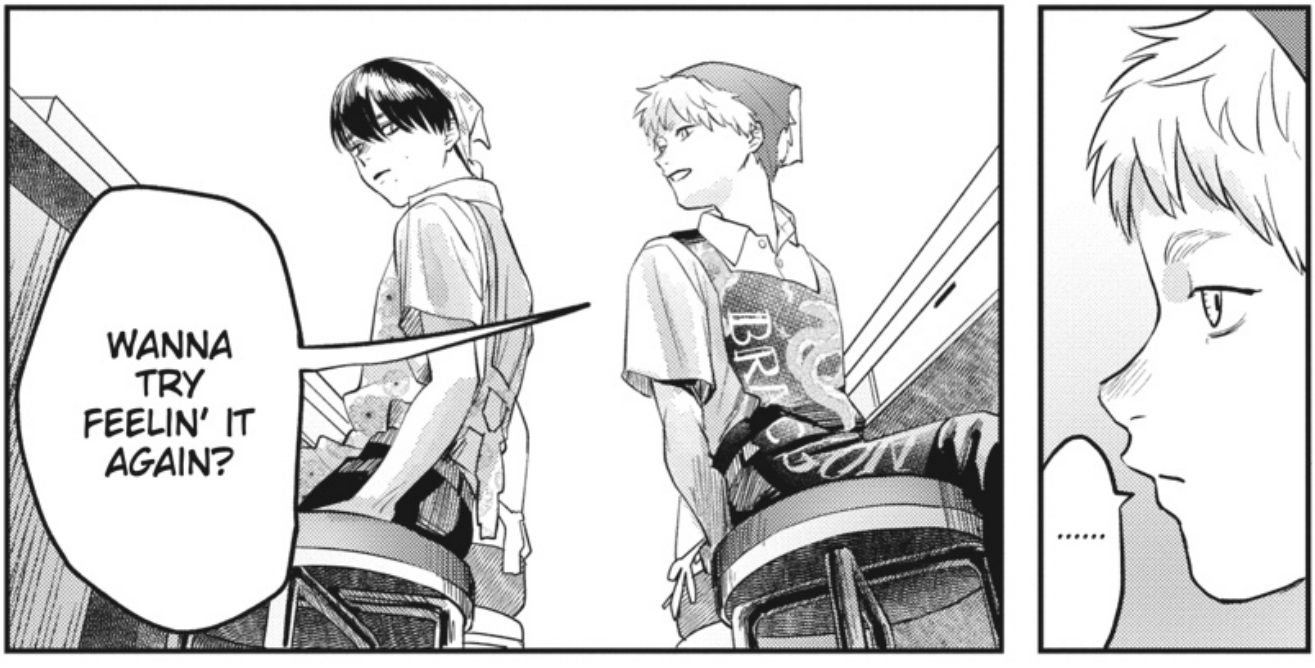
TUG
AND MY PIECES'RE SMALLER THAN EVERYONE ELSE'S, AREN'T THEY!?
THEY'RE ALL THE SAME, YA DUM-DUM!
THEY'RE BACK AT IT.

KNOW?
...
THIS THING LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THEM TRIANGLE CAPS GHOSTS WEAR, HEH-HEH-HEH.
MAN, CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
OUR TEAM FRIED OUR CHICKEN SO DANG MUCH...
...THE PIECES TURNED INTO THE SORT OF THINGS THAT ABSORB ALL THE LIGHT AROUND 'EM.
WHOA.
DARK MATTER.
TASTES LIKE THE BACK END OF A TRUCK!
WANT SOME?
NAH... I'M GOOD...

...WHAT IS IT NOW?
WHY WERE YA LOOKIN' AT THE RAW CHICKEN LIKE THAT EARLIER?
YOU WERE STARIN' AT IT SOMETHIN' FIERCE...
OH, UH...
I...
WELL, IT'S JUST...
...THE WAY RAW CHICKEN FEELS...
IT'S KINDA LIKE...
...HOW IT FELT THAT ONE TIME...
...WITH THAT WEIRD STUFF INSIDE YA... IS ALL...

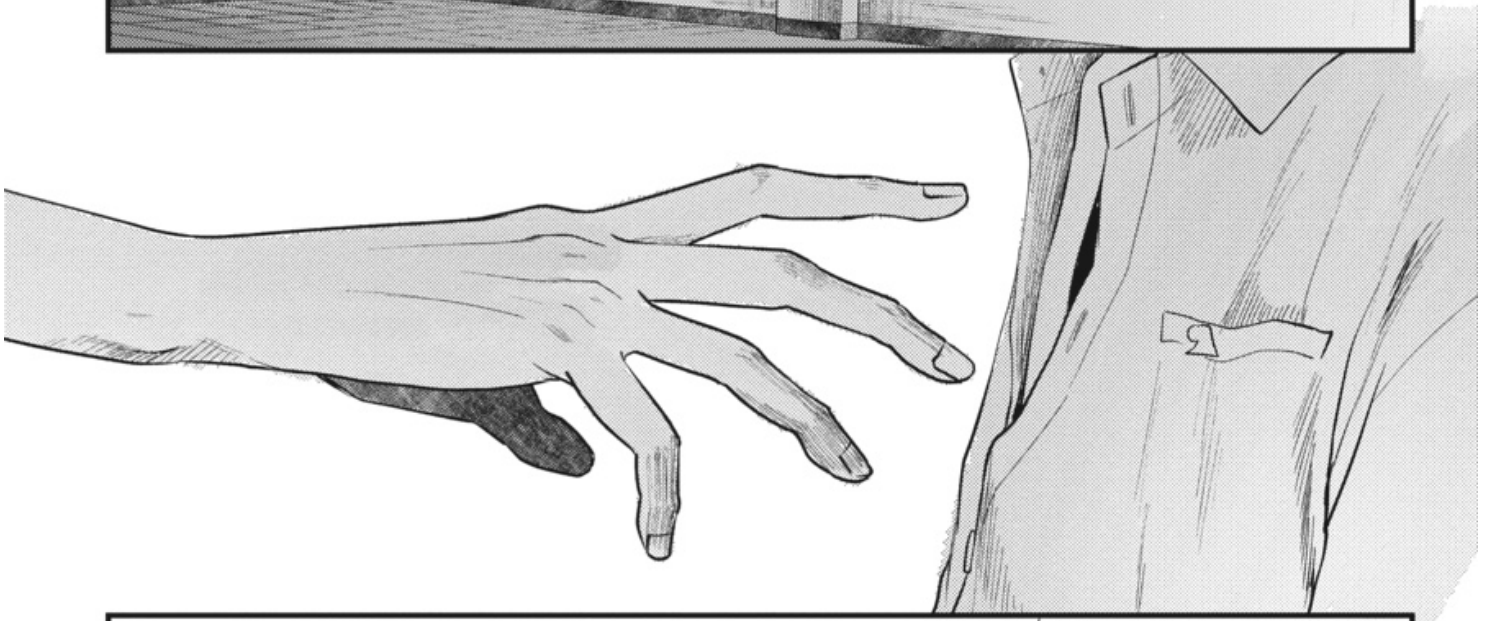
YOU'VE BEEN THINKIN' 'BOUT THAT STUFF ALL THIS TIME?
HAVIN' THEM NASTY THOUGHTS ALL ON YER LONE-SOME... HEH-HEH...
THE HECK!? WHAT'S WITH THAT REACTION, MAN!? IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...
D-DANG, MAN...
.....

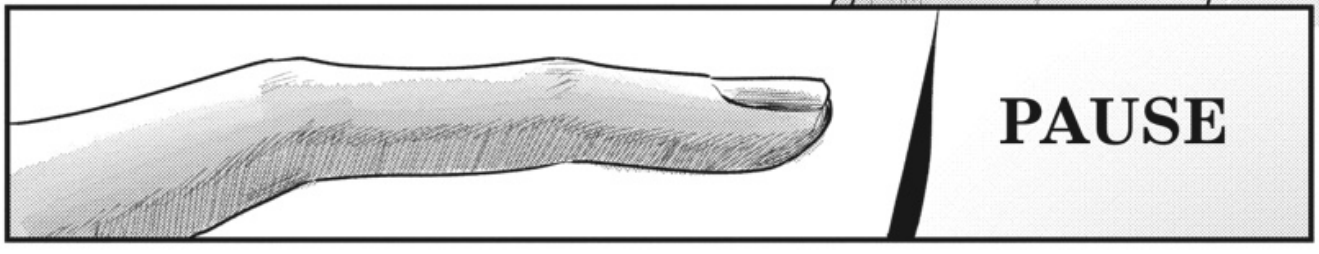
NAH, IT'S ALL RIGHT, THOUGH.
WA HA HA!
YOU KILL ME!


WANNA TRY FEELIN' IT AGAIN?
.....

...BUT YA KNOW, YOU WERE LIKE THIS BACK WHEN WE WERE ON THAT FOREST PATH TOO.
YOU REALLY CAN'T HANDLE IT WHEN GUYS LIKE ME GET ALL UP IN YOUR SPACE.
GETS ME NERVOUS JUS' LOOKIN' AT YA.
HUH?
NO WAY.
IT FEELS TOO FREAKY ...
THAT'S NOT THE KIND OF THING I CAN GET USED TO.
THAT'S WHY IT'S BETTER IF YOU GET USED TO FEELIN' IT!
RIGHT?
...ALL RIGHT.
FINE, THEN.
...

NO ENTRY
PERMITTED




PAUSE

AHH, C'MON
ALREADY.

HURRY UP! CLUBS'RE 'BOUT TO START.
...WAIT.
I GOTTA JUST...
HAAH...
...PSYCH MYSELF UP FOR IT.
ZHK

UHNNN-
AAAA-
AAH...!!
HA HA!
SEE? YOU'RE GETTIN' USED TO IT.
UNGH... OH, WAIT A SEC.
IT'S NOT AS BAD AS BEFORE.
...

HNH!
THE HELL!?
IT'S ON ME...!?
NISH
NISH
NISH
NISH
NISH
NISH
...!
YEAH...

IT'S JUST LIKE LAST TIME...!!
NSH
NSH
IT'S CRAWLING UP MY ARM...!!
NSH
NSH
NSH
NSH
NSH

UNGH!
UNNNH!
...BUT WHY DOES IT FEEL SO GOOD?
THIS HAS TO BE ALL KINDS OF WRONG...
BA-DUM
HAAH!
HAFF!
HFF!
FF!
HFF!

NOOOO!!!!
NI
JOLT

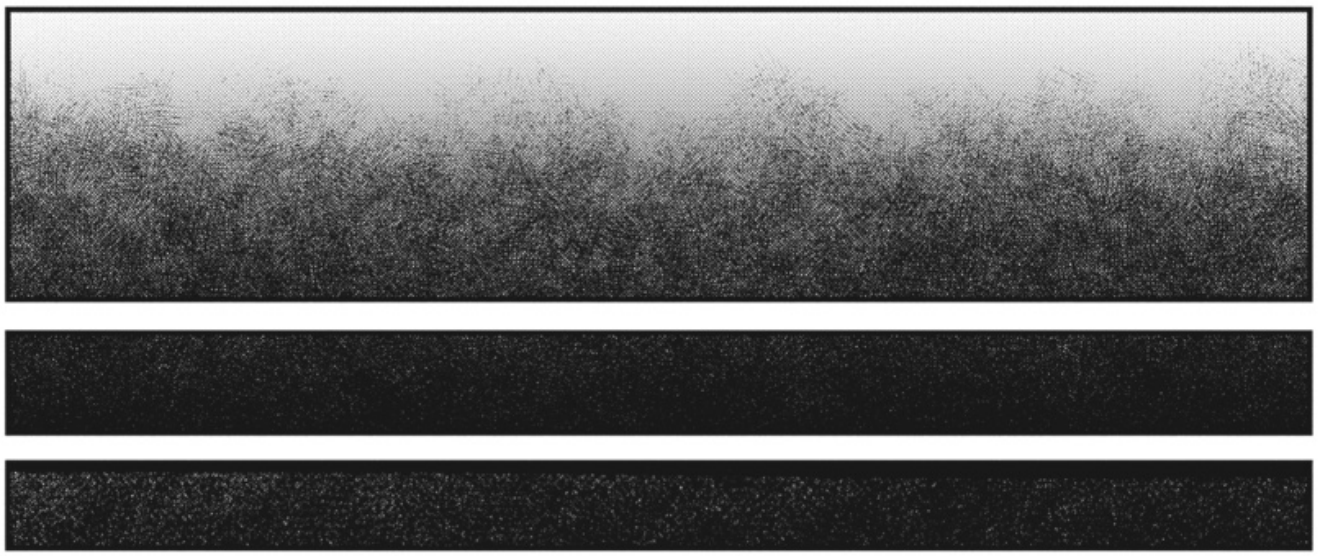
SHWIP

HFF!
HFF...

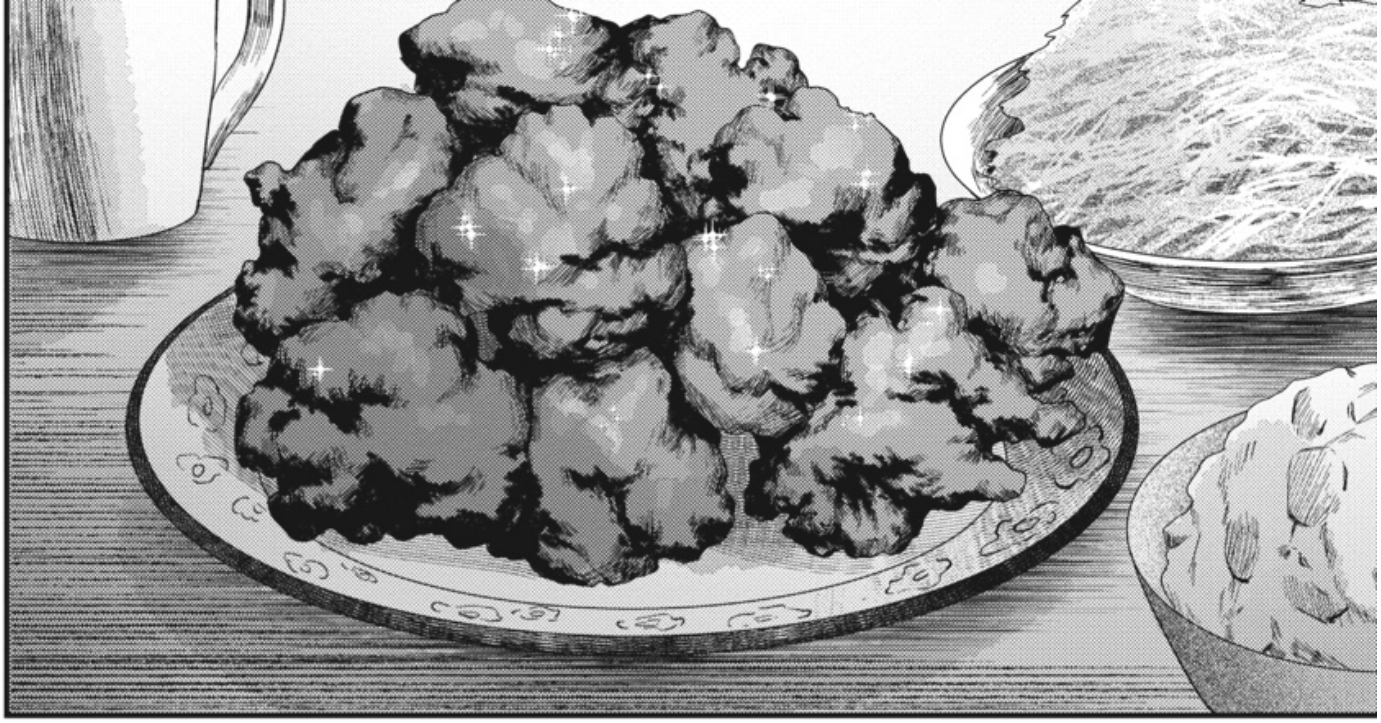
HUH ...?
I JUST THOUGHT *I'D TRY* TOUCHING YOU FOR A SEC...
GUESS THAT WON'T WORK IF YER NOT USED TO IT...
...WHAT'D YOU DO JUST NOW?
...LOOK, YOU. IS THAT THE TRUTH?
I AIN'T TOO SURE ABOUT THIS, BUT YOU WEREN'T JUST DOIN' THAT 'COS IT FEELS GOOD FOR YOU, RIGHT?
UH...

...YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOIN' THINGS PEOPLE DON'T REALLY LIKE...
YOU GOT THAT?
WH-WHAT ...?
YEAH, I KNOW.
OKAY...
I BELIEVE YOU.
FOR NOW.
BUT...
BUT I REALLY WASN'T LYING TO YA.
I WOULDN'T LIE TO YA...

NOD
HUH?
..."FOR NOW"...?



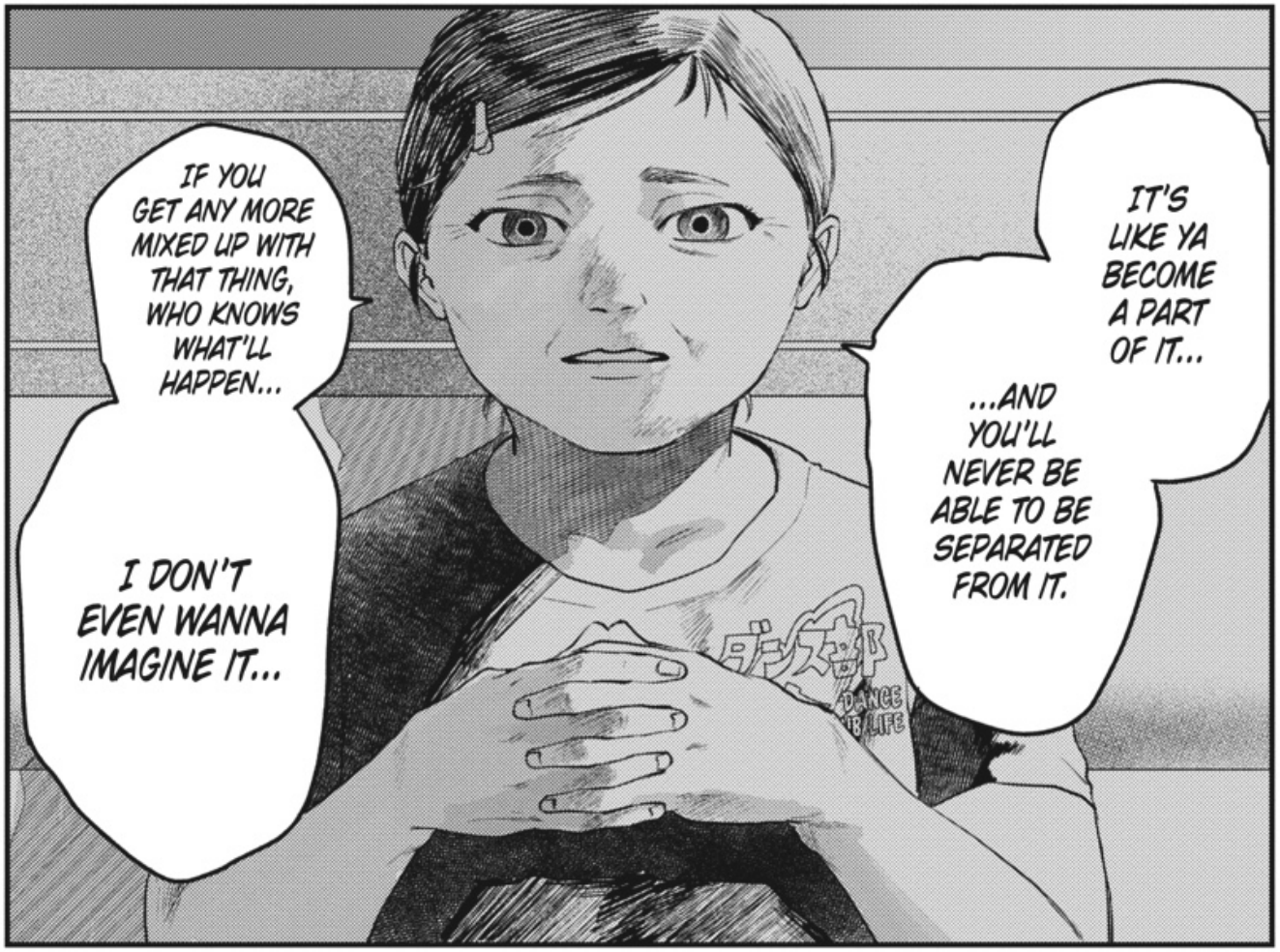
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK



FOR TOMORROW, KIBOGAYAMA TOWN WILL BE CLEAR AND SUNNY WITH OCCASIONAL CLOUDS. THE CHANCE OF RAIN IS...
IT JUST HAD TO BE FRIED CHICKEN...

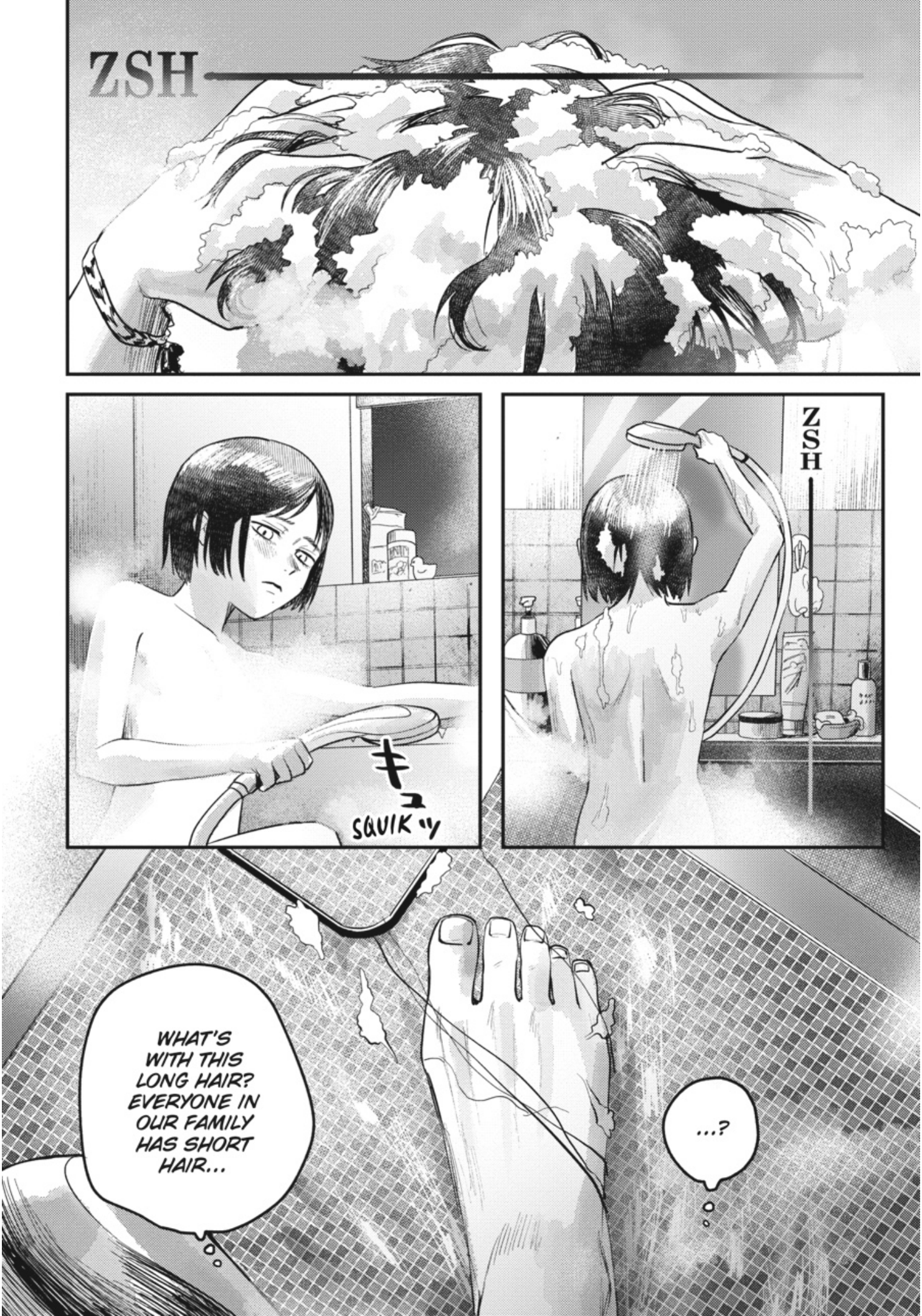
...BUT HAS IT ACTUALLY GOTTEN DARKER THAN IT WAS YESTERDAY...?
I'D NOTICED THAT THE BRUISE HIKARU LEFT WHEN HE GRABBED MY ARM WASN'T GOING AWAY...
...YOU'LL MIX...

WHILE YER STILL ALIVE...
...YER INSIDES WILL GET CLOSER TO WHATEVER THAT THING IS...

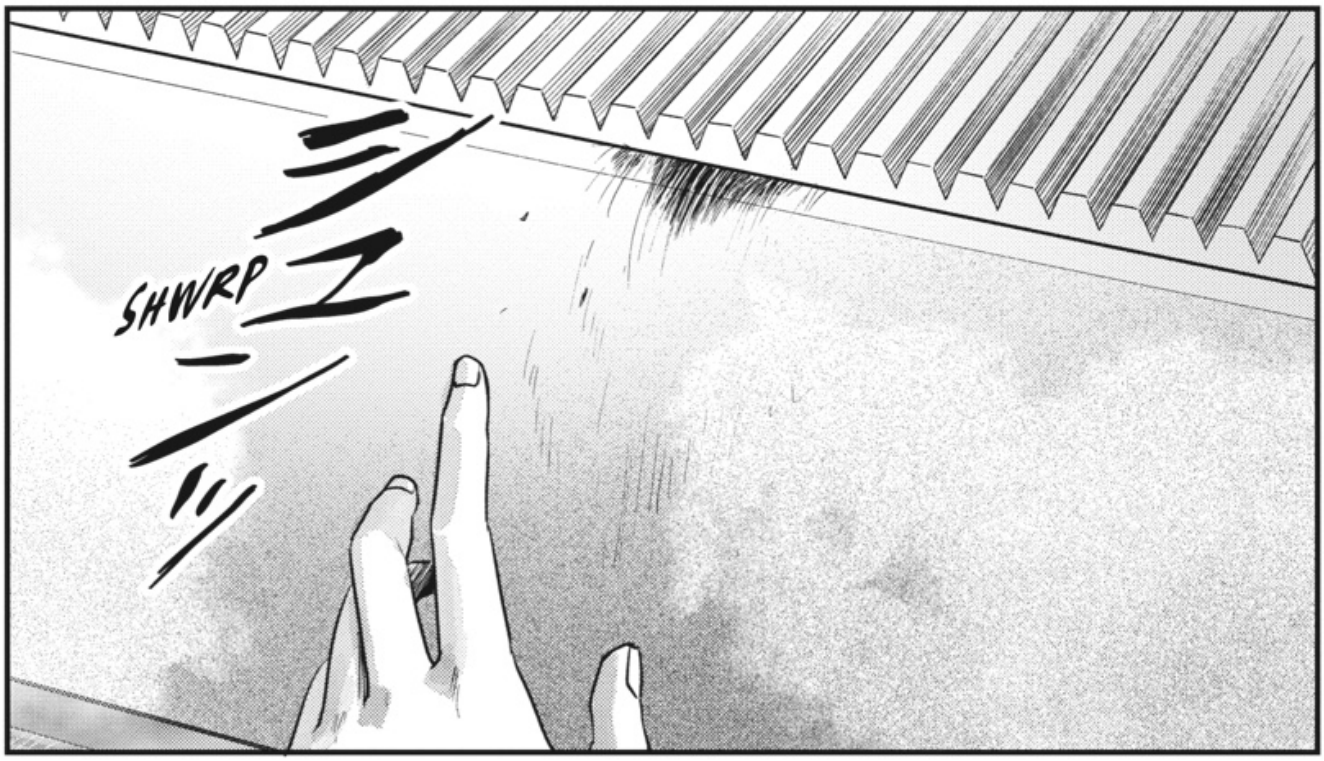

IT'S LIKE YA BECOME A PART OF IT...
...AND YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BE SEPARATED FROM IT.
IF YOU GET ANY MORE MIXED UP WITH THAT THING, WHO KNOWS WHAT'LL HAPPEN...
I DON'T EVEN WANNA IMAGINE IT...

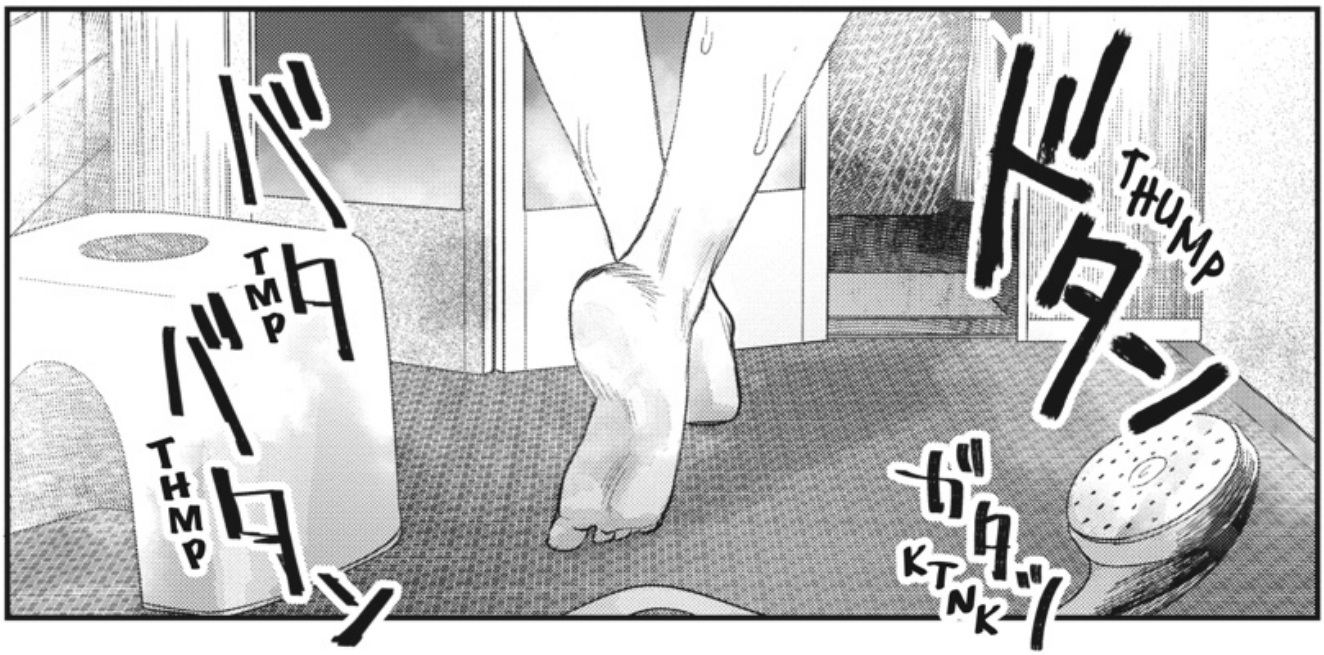
ALSO...
...IT MIGHT ATTRACT THINGS FROM THE OTHER SIDE TOWARD YA MORE EASILY...

HEY, MOM!
IS THE BATH READY?
YEAH, IT'S READY.
...
WELL, GUESS WHAT, NII-CHAN!? I'M USING BATH SALTS TODAY!
AWW... WELL, AT LEAST USE THE CYPRESS ONE.


ZSH
ZSH
キュ
SQUIK
WHAT'S WITH THIS LONG HAIR? EVERYONE IN OUR FAMILY HAS SHORT HAIR...
...?

SPLISH
WHAT IS THIS THING...?
EE...


シュー
SHWRP


ドタン
THUMP
ガタッ
KTNK
バタ
TMP
バタ
THMP

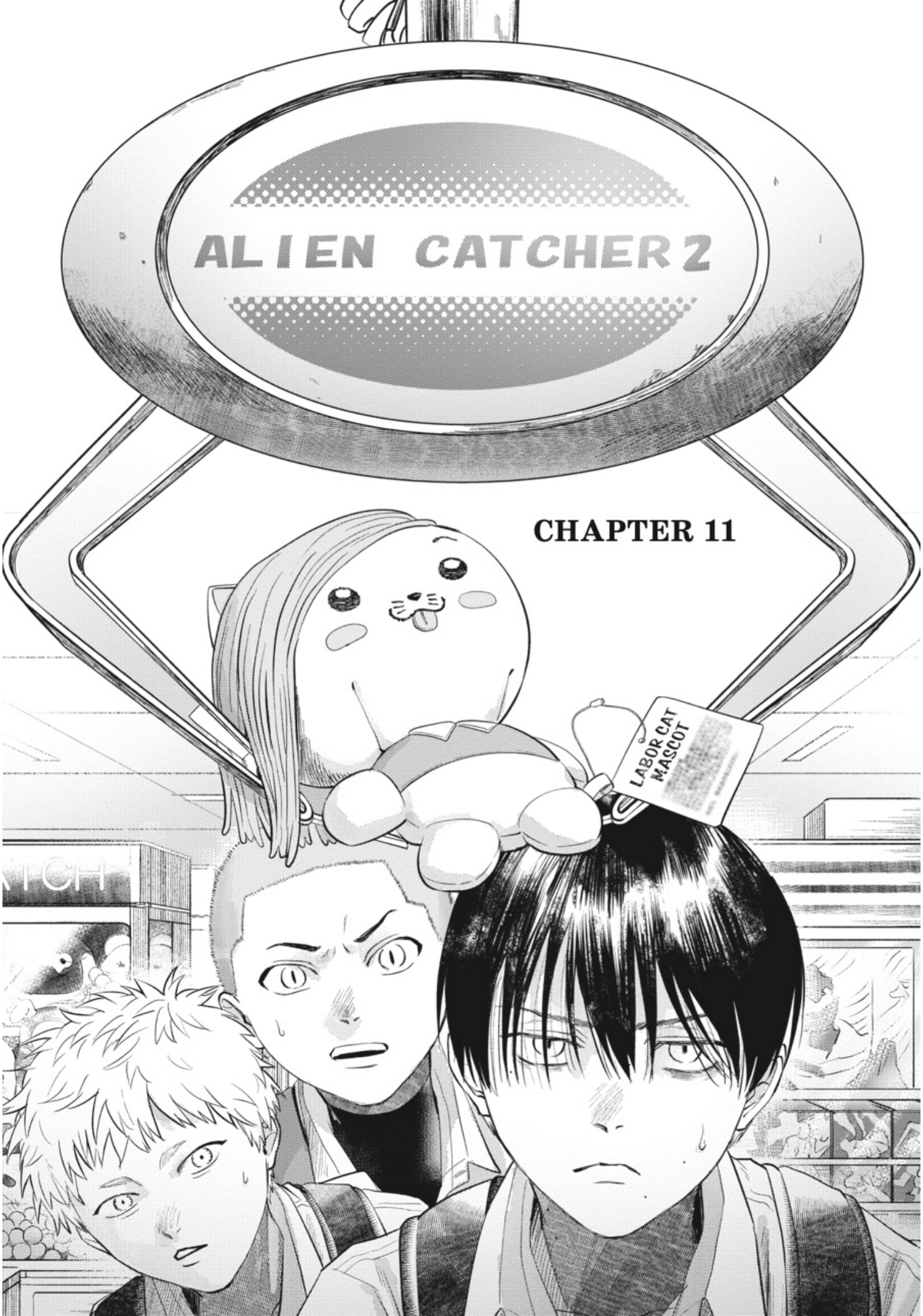
NOPE.
NOPE.
バタン
SHUT

バタタタ
SKITTER
THWMP

CHAPTER 10 END

HEY, KAORU, LEMME BORROW ONE OF YER BAN-DANNAS.
SURE, BUT MINE ARE ALL SMALL...

ROSE
BATH
SALTS...


ALIEN CATCHER 2
CHAPTER 11
LABOR CAT MASCOT

YAHOO!
LABORCAT MASCOT
AWE-SOOOME!! SO COOL!!
PWEE PWEE PWEE
WOWEE! HOW'RE YA SO DANG GOOD AT CLAW MACHINES?
THANKS! THANKS SO MUCH!
YOU'RE THE BEST!
テレテレテン
DING-A-LING-DING
BWOOO
ドシューン
BWOOO
ドシューン
I REALLY OUTDID MYSELF THERE.
'COS KAORU MADE ME DO IT FOR HER A MILLION TIMES.
テレテレテレレン
DING-A-LING-A-DING

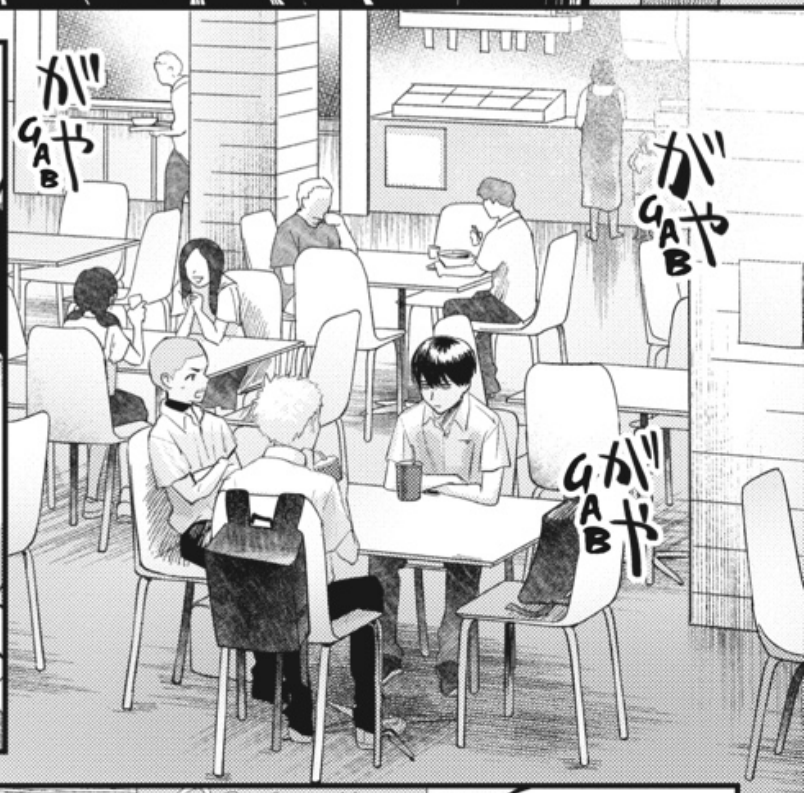
ズン THM ズン THM THM ズン
YOU CAN DO ANYTHIN', YOSHIKI!
YOU'RE EVEN GREAT AT SCHOOL.
YOU'D BE PERFECT IF YOU WEREN'T SUCH A HARD-CORE GLOOMY GUS!
ドシューン BWOOO
テンテンテン DING-DING-DING
テレテッテッテン RING-A-LING-DING
PWEE PWEE PWEE ピロピロピロ
HUH?
ALL THAT PRAISE IS A BIT MUCH...
WOULD YA CALL THAT PRAISE?
STILL, THOUGH, I JUST CAN'T IMAGINE A CHEERY VERSION OF YA THAT AIN'T GLOOMY.
IF YA FELL INTO A LAKE, WE MIGHT GET YA BACK AS "NICE GUY" YOSHIKI, EH-HEH-HEH.
FOR YOUR HONESTY, I WILL GIFT YOU THIS CLEAN-CUT YOSHIKI...
HE GETS A FULL EIGHT HOURS OF SLEEP EVERY NIGHT.

YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF JERKS.
GIMME BACK THAT DOLL.
WHAT? NAH, I DON' WANNA.
WHY'D YA WANT IT IN THE FIRST PLACE?
YA GIVIN' IT TO A GIRL OR SOMETHIN'?
HUH?

TA HA HA!
TA HA!
NO, NO! LIKE I'D EVER ...
...I MEAN, RIGHT?
THAT'D BE PRETTY DUMB, HUH?
TA HA!
DA HA HA!
HE'S TOO EASY TO FIGURE OUT.
WHAT WAS THE DEAL WITH THIS CAT AGAIN?
SOMETHING ABOUT IT GROWIN' ITS HAIR OUT...
...BECAUSE IT WORKED TOO MUCH AT A FACTORY FOR HAIR-GROWTH FORMULA.
HAIR...

SWIRLY UDON
IN THE BATH-ROOM!?
HUH!? A WIG MON-STER!?

THAT'S RIGHT.
MY SISTER SAYS SHE DOESN'T WANNA TAKE A BATH BECAUSE THERE'S A WIG MONSTER IN THE TUB.


がや
GAB

SWIRLY UDON
TAKOYAKI
AND SHE SAID THE THING WAS AGGRESSIVE AS ALL GET-OUT.
...NO WAY!
NAH. IT WAS, LIKE, A STUPID AMOUNT OF HAIR. THERE'S NO WAY IT COULD BE LOOSE HAIR.
HUH!? HA-HA...THE HECK IS THAT!? IT'S TOTALLY JUST LOOSE HAIR.

HMM...
ANOTHER GHOST, HUH...!?
MY SENPAI ON THE BASEBALL TEAM ALSO SAID HE SPOTTED SOMETHIN' NOT TOO LONG AGO.
SEEMS LIKE THIS KINDA THING'S BEEN HAPPENIN' MORE AN' MORE.
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN IT YOURSELF, HAVE YA, YOSHIKI?
UH... NO.
I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHIN'.
THEN WE'LL GO AN' CHECK OUT YOUR BATHROOM LATER TODAY.
NO WAY!

RATTLE RATTLE...
BOY, IT'S HOT OUT TODAY!
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME BARLEY TEA?
NAH.
LET'S GET TO THE BATHROOM FIRST!
...WHY'S A GHOST SHOWIN' UP IN MY HOUSE?
AND WHAT IS THAT THING ANYWAY...?

I'M...NOT EXACTLY SURE WHAT YOU'D CALL IT.
SOMETHIN' LIKE A "STAIN"...OR "IMPURITY"?
THEY ALWAYS COLLECT IN PLACES WHERE HUMANS LIVE.
THEY DON'T NORMALLY APPEAR LIKE THAT, THOUGH.
BUT WHY MY PLACE SPECIFICALLY...? THIS SUCKS.

WELL, THAT'S 'COS...
...THERE'S SOMETHING APPEALING ABOUT YOU TO THOSE THINGS FROM THE OTHER SIDE.
SINCE YOU'RE NICE.
I DON'T REALLY GET IT.
I'M NOT NICE AT ALL.

HMM...

NAH, IT'S THERE.
UGH.
NOTHIN' THERE?
HONESTLY, IT'S FINE IF THESE THINGS ARE DRAWN TO ME...
...BUT WHY ARE THEY COMIN' TO YOU?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY WANT FROM YOU.
I'LL SMASH IT UP AND PUT IT INSIDE ME LIKE LAST TIME.
...IS THAT... ALL RIGHT?
YEAH, IT'S FINE.
BECAUSE I'M PROTECTING YOU.

TICK
TOCK
TICK
TOCK
TICK
TOCK
TICK
TOCK
BAM
THNK
SPLASH

!?
HIKARU!? WHAT HAPPENED !!?
GRAB
TH...
THIS MIGHT BE BAD.
SLAM

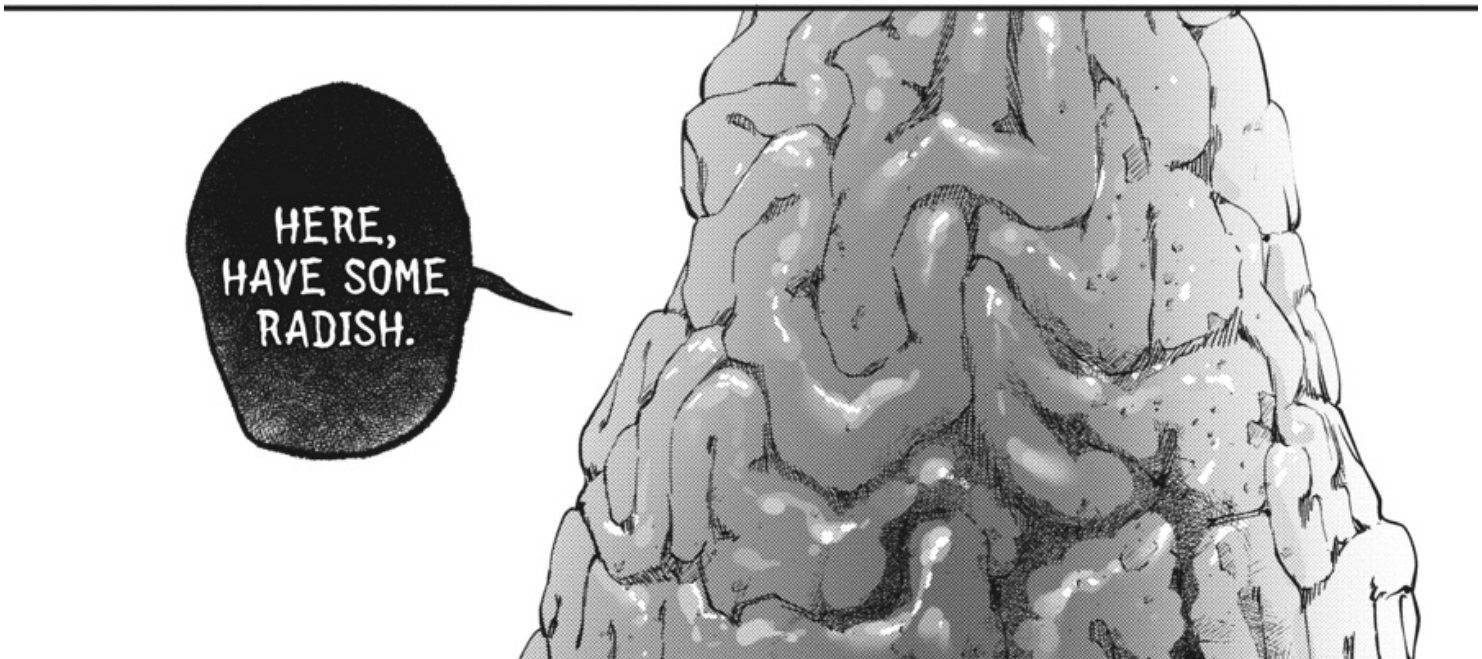
HEY!
SPLASH
WH—
WHA…
WHAT ARE YOU DOIN'…!?

!?
HSZ
THIS SENSATION...
YANK

SPLASH

THIS SENSATION...
IT FEELS LIKE SOMETHING'S GOING INSIDE ME...
BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB
BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB
BLUB

HUH?
...
WAIT. AM I DREAM-ING?
THIS IS A DREAM...
MUST BE...
...
THE BATH...


HERE, HAVE SOME RADISH.

THAT BOY OF THEIRS SURE IS SLOW.
UH.
HUH?

HEY! AIN'TCHA GONNA CUT YER BANGS?
YOU'RE SMART, AREN'T YA? WHAT'RE YA DOIN' FOR COLLEGE?
SPLTCH

YER SISTER'S A REAL BEAUT. THINK SHE'D LIKE MY OLDEST?
EVERYONE'S WORRIED...
BEFORE, IN FRONT OF THE TSUJINAKAS...
THE BATHS OF YOURS AIN'T NO GOOD.
WHAT'RE THEY DOIN', KEEPIN' THEIR LIGHTS ON TILL THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
THOSE TSUJINAKAS WERE FIGHTIN' AGAIN. I FEEL SO BAD FOR THEIR SON!
BOY CAN'T EVEN GIVE A PROPER HELLO!
WHY DOESN'T YER SISTER GO TO SCHOOL? YA BEST NOT SPOIL THAT GIRL, Y'HEAR?
SHE HARDLY EVER GOES OUTSIDE.
AIN'T NO TROUBLE AT ALL. GO ON AN' TAKE IT, NOW.
Y' AIN'T DOIN' NO CLUB ACTIVITIES?
YOU CAN TELL YER AUNTIE ANYTHIN'.
THAT LADY IS AWFUL SCARY. THEM CITY GIRLS'RE SO STUCK UP.
SOUND TOUGH
THOSE BANGS ARE AN EYESORE. LEMME CUT 'EM FOR YA!
Y' AIN'T INTERESTED IN NOBODY? YOU OUGHTTA HURRY AN' GET HITCHED FOR YER MOTHER'S SAKE.
MR. HELPS SON OUT AROUND THE HOUSE MORE.
YER GONNA GO TO THE CITY AN' LEAVE NO ONE TO TAKE OVER THE LOGGIN' BUSINESS, AIN'T YA? Y'OUGHTTA THINK ABOUT THE PARENTS YER LEAVIN' BEHIND.
MY, YER SO BIG! HOW TALL ARE YA NOW?
HE'S ALWAYS GOT A GLOOMY LOOK ON HIS FACE.
DON'T YOU WORRY
YA LOOK JUST LIKE YER FATHER. LOOKIN' MORE AND MORE LIKE HIM EVERY YEAR.
ズキッ
OW!
YO-SHIKI !!

CROWLY
DON'T RUN AWAY.
YA DUMMY.

CROWLY

THAT'S... THE BIRD I WAS TAKIN' CARE OF WITH HIKARU WAY BACK WHEN...
CROWLY'S DEAD, AND IT'S ALL YER FAULT, YOSHIKI.
.....
YER WRONG.
AM NOT!
IT WAS YER TURN TO FEED 'IM TODAY.

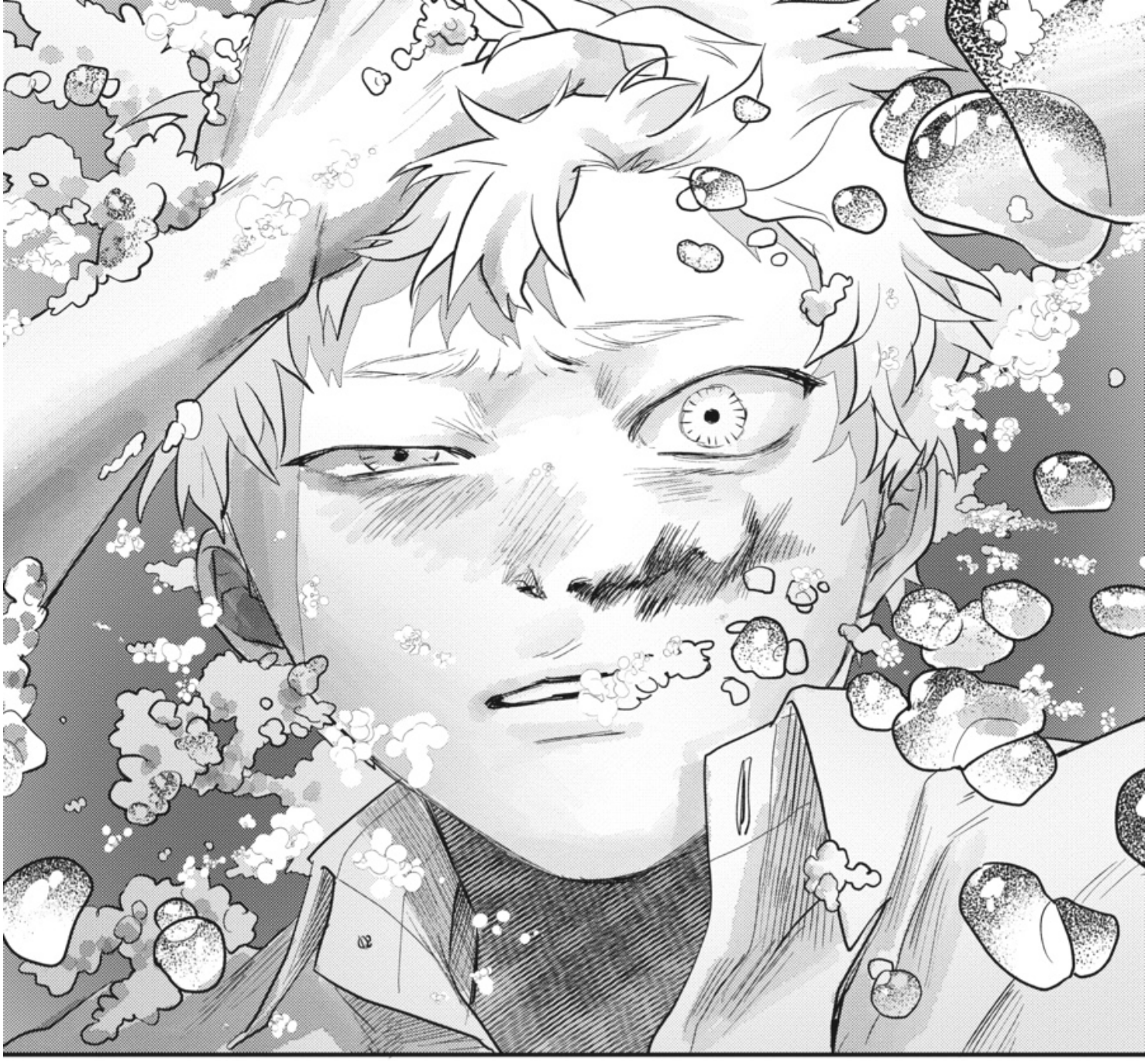
WHAT!?
IT DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN!
STOP MAKIN' EXCUSES!
HE'S A LIVIN' CREATURE...
THIS SORT OF THING HAPPENS...

THROB
AND YOU FORGOT TO FEED HIM THAT ONE TIME TOO, DIDN'T YOU?
BUT TODAY WAS YOUR TURN TO FEED 'IM!
THROB
THROB
THROB
WELL, HE DIED DURIN' THAT TIME.
LOOK, I'M SORRY FOR FORGETTIN' TO FEED 'IM.
BUT IT WAS JUST ONE TIME.
YOU FORGOT TWICE, AND I FED HIM BOTH THOSE TIMES.

HUH? YOU MAKE ME SICK!
IT'S NOT MY FAULT...!!
THROB
NO WAY! NEVER!
HUH?
YOU DUMMY !!
TCH! JUST ADMIT IT! YOU KILLED 'IM!

WHY DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE BLAME!?
AND IT'S BEEN ME TAKIN' CARE OF CROWLY ALL THIS TIME!
HUH?
YER THE ONE WHO MAKES ME SICK!
SO DON'T YA RECKON YER THE ONE WHO KILLED 'IM!?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MAKES HIM EAT WEIRD JUNK ALL THE TIME!
BEATS ME!
HUH?
SO HOW DID HE DIE, THEN?
HE WAS DOIN' FINE UP TILL JUST NOW.
...!
YER ALWAYS SUCH A WHINY WIMP!

ばしゃ
SPLASH
ばしゃん
SPLASH



YOSHIKI
...!?
VOLUME 2 END

HIS MOM CUTS HIS HAIR, AND HE STARTED HATING GETTING HIS BANGS CUT AROUND THE TIME HE WAS IN HIS THIRD YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL. HE'S BEEN LETTING THEM GROW OUT SINCE THEN.

YOSHIKI'S CLOTHES

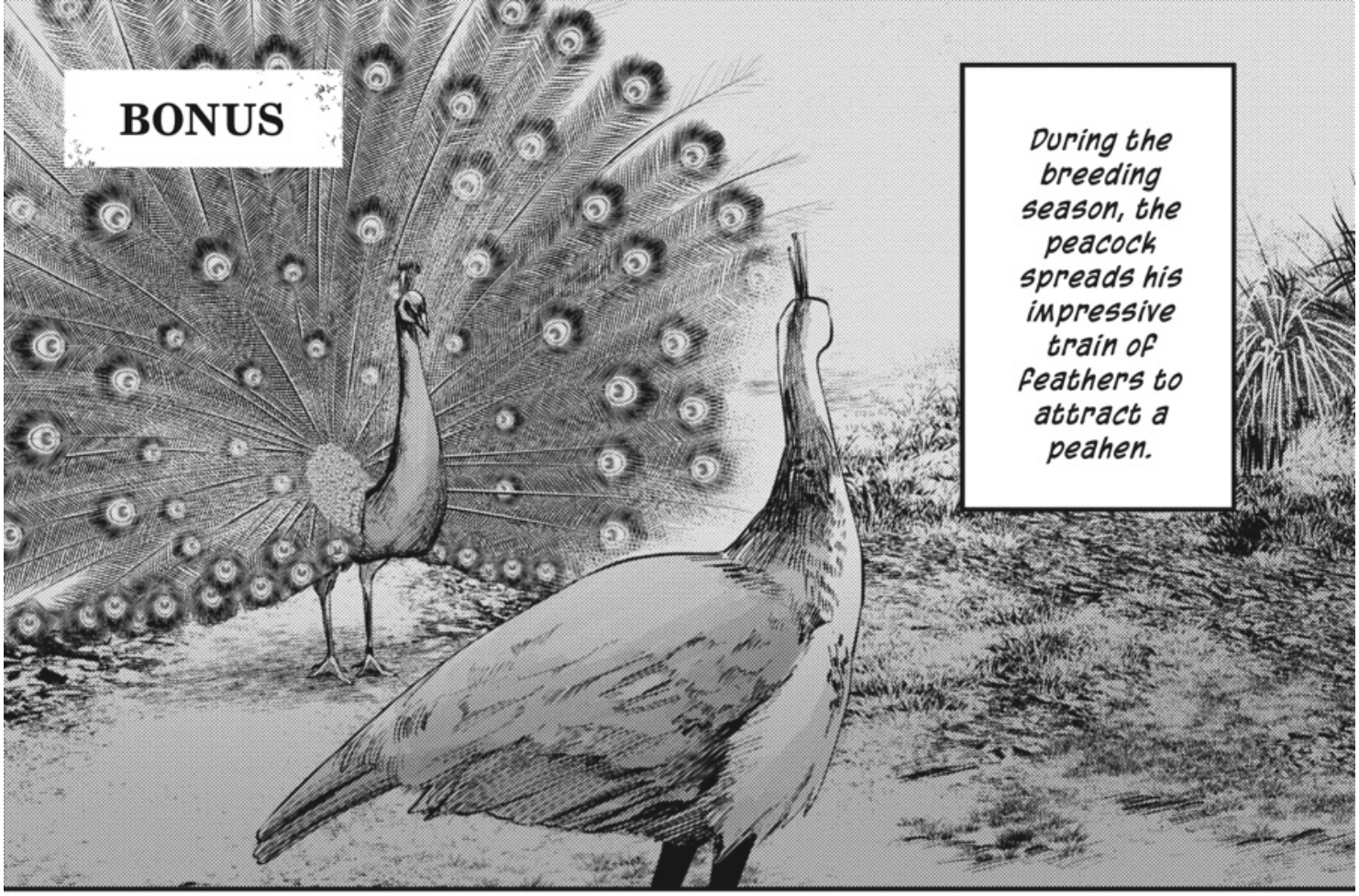
HIS MOM BOUGHT THIS AT MION MALL. THREE PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE WEAR POLO SHIRTS WITH THIS EXACT PATTERN EVERY DAY.

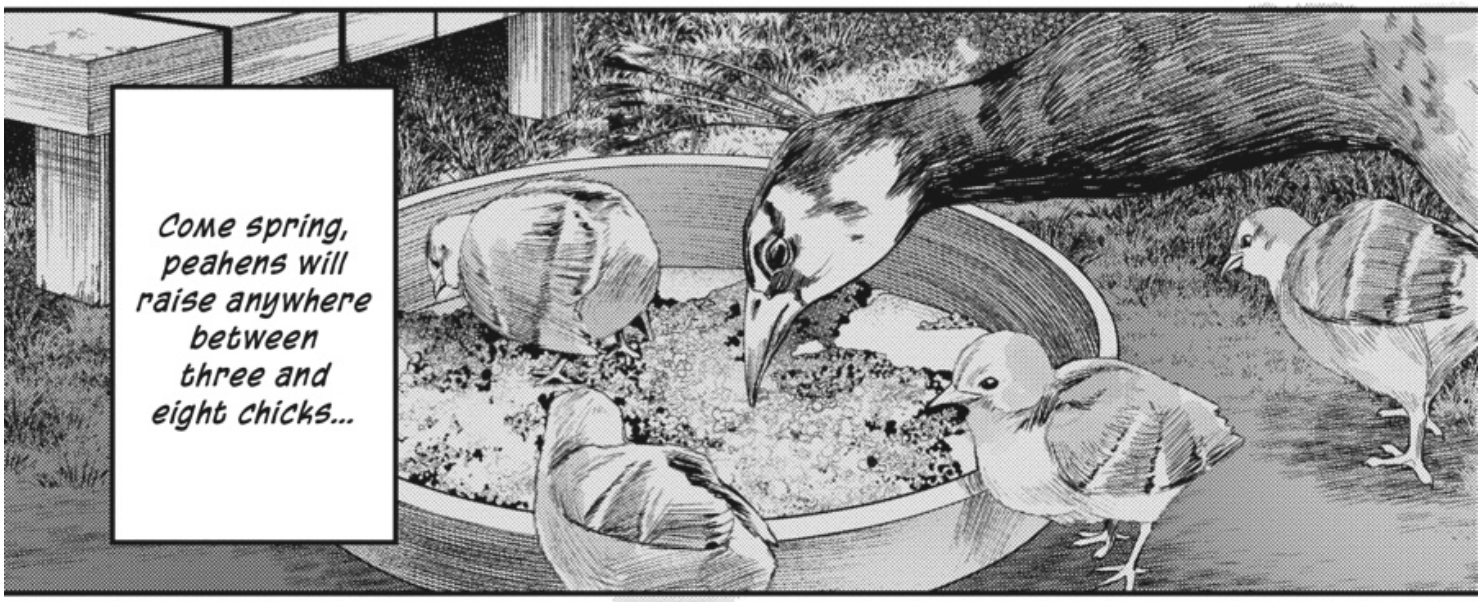
MERCHANDISE FROM YOSHIKI'S FAVORITE MANGA. HE WON IT IN A SWEEPSTAKES DRAWING.

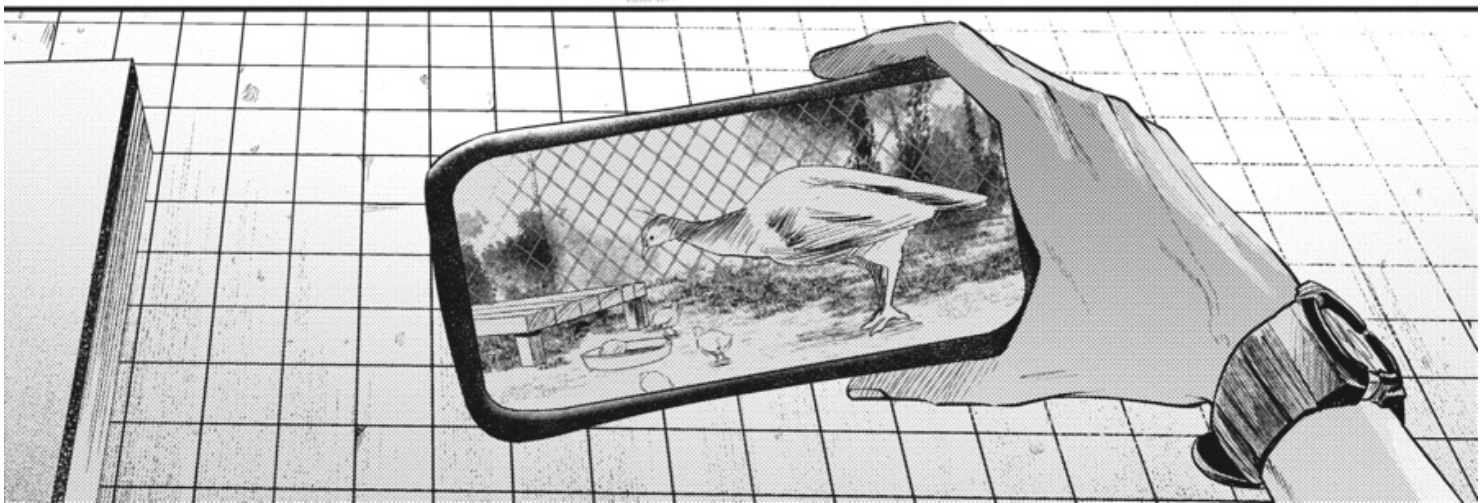
HIS MOM BOUGHT THIS AT MION MALL. HE LIKES THE FABRIC AND WEARS IT OFTEN.

A T-SHIRT WITH ENGLISH TEXT ON IT THAT HIS MOM BOUGHT AT MION MALL (HE WEARS IT AS PAJAMAS.) THE MORE BEAT-UP IT IS, THE BETTER.

HIS REGULAR SCHOOL UNIFORM. HE FEELS THE MOST RELAXED IN THIS.


BONUS
During the breeding season, the peacock spreads his impressive train of feathers to attract a peahen.


Come spring, peahens will raise anywhere between three and eight chicks...



DON'T LET HARA CATCH YOU WITH YOUR PHONE OUT.
WHAT THE HECK'RE YOU WATCHIN' ANYWAY?
WHOA...THE WONDERFUL MYSTERY OF LIFE.
THIS.
...
WHAT'S SO SPECIAL 'BOUT THAT?
MM, WELL...

I JUST THINK LIVIN' THINGS ARE AMAZIN'.
I MEAN, THEY CAN MULTIPLY AN' EVERY-THIN'.
BEIN' ABLE TO CREATE NEW LIVIN' THINGS IS JUST DOWNRIGHT INCREDIBLE...
LIKE YOU'RE NOT A LIVING THING, HUH...?
...YEAH, GUESS SO.
YEAH.
OH, THAT REMINDS ME— IT HAS NOTHIN' TO DO WITH THIS, BUT...
...THIS GIRL FROM CLASS D SAID SHE LIKED ME ALL OF A SUDDEN.

HUH...!?
...
HOW'D YOU ANSWER HER?
HUH?
UH... ANSWER HER...?

Y...
YA MIGHT NOT REMEMBER THIS, BUT...
THANKS!
HUH?
BUT WHY?
...LAST YEAR, IN THIS VERY SPOT...
...I GOT MYSELF IN A BIND 'COS I DIDN'T HAVE AN UMBRELLA, AND YOU LENT ME YER RAINCOAT...
YOU SAID YOU'D BE FINE, SINCE YOU COULD "AVOID THE RAIN BY DASHING THROUGH THE DROPS," THEN YA RAN OFF.
AND EVER SINCE THEN...

OH, THERE WAS... SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN MY MEMORY...
...I GUESS...
OHHH. SO THAT'S WHY YOU LIKE ME!
THANKS...?

?

UM...!
SO IS THAT...
...O...
OKAY...?

GEEZ...
THAT MEANS SHE WAS ASKING YOU OUT...
AND THEN SHE JUST SORTA RAN OFF SOMEWHERE.
OH, IS THAT WHAT IT MEANS TO SAY YOU LIKE SOMEONE?
SURE DOES...
HM...
ATHAS

OH! ISN'T IT JUST LIKE THAT BIRD FROM BEFORE?
WELL, I GET THAT, LIKE, AS A CONCEPT, BUT...
I MEAN...
...I JUST FIGURE THERE ARE DIFFERENT WAYS TO LIKE THINGS, RIGHT...?
... HUH?

...BUT HE'S SOMETHING FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM A PERSON...
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WOULD SAY THAT...
...THAT GIRL AIN'T NO BIRD.
YOU OUGHTTA GIVE HER A PROPER APOLOGY.
.....
I LIKE YOU.
...

I'M SORRY 'BOUT BEFORE... I JUST CAN'T GO OUT WITH YOU...
...OH, NO.
PLEASE... DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT AT ALL.
EVEN I'M KINDA CONFUSED ABOUT THE WHOLE THING.

I DON'T REALLY GET THIS STUFF.
THAT'S OKAY...

HIKARU-KUN, YOU'RE...
...KINDA WEIRD, AREN'T YOU?
OH!
NOT IN A BAD WAY OR ANY-THING...

.....

YEAH, RECKON I AM.

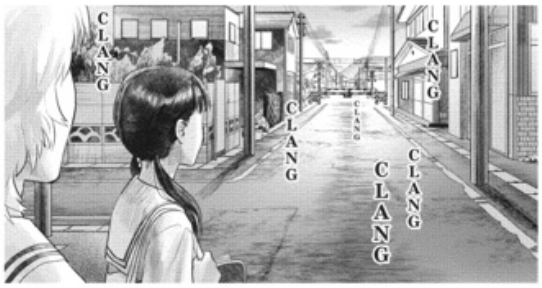
I THINK I LOVE YOSHIKI...
I REALLY DO...
WHAT IS THIS FEELING?
DO I "LIKE" HIM THE SAME WAY SHE LIKES ME?
...
I HAVE NO IDEA...

HIKARU.
DID YOU GIVE HER A PROPER APOLOGY?
OH!
YUP.
JUST WHAT KIND OF "LIKE"...
...IS MY LIKE?
BONUS END

Afterword

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BUYING VOLUME 2! THERE'S A LOT MORE TO COME IN *THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED*, SO I'D BE VERY HAPPY IF YOU CONTINUED TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS SERIES.
MOKUMOKUREN
ASSISTANTS
MARIA YOMI
SARINA HIRAKAWA
NOMU
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
OW, OW, OW!
KEEP STILL!

Next Volume Preview



As people begin to notice *the* changes around them, *the actions of* two boys *will* take shape *and* swell *into a* tidal wave.

THE SUMMER

HIKARU

DIED

continues in Volume 3...

THE SUMMER

HIKARU

DIED

TRANSLATION NOTES

COMMON HONORIFICS

***-san*:** The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.
***-sama*:** Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.
***-kun*:** Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.
***-chan*:** An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.
no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
-niisan, *nii-san*, *aniki*, etc.: A term of endearment meaning "big brother" that may be more widely used to address any young man who is like a brother, regardless of whether he is related or not.

GENERAL

Hikaru: The Chinese character for Hikaru's name means "light."

Cicadas: The cries of cicadas are pervasive throughout this volume. Cicadas' cries are infamously loud, and the sound is synonymous with summer in Japan.

PAGE 44

Mince-aniki: A nickname created by combining the words mincemeat and *aniki*. The reference to mincemeat likely comes from the fact that the butcher often feeds the cat. *Aniki*, or "older brother," is how delinquents or *yakuza* families are said to refer to the top dog, so animals with gruff-looking faces are sometimes lovingly referred to as *aniki*.

PAGE 56

Takoyaki: A popular festival snack, *takoyaki* are balls of batter and octopus fried in a special pan designed for the purpose.

PAGE 116

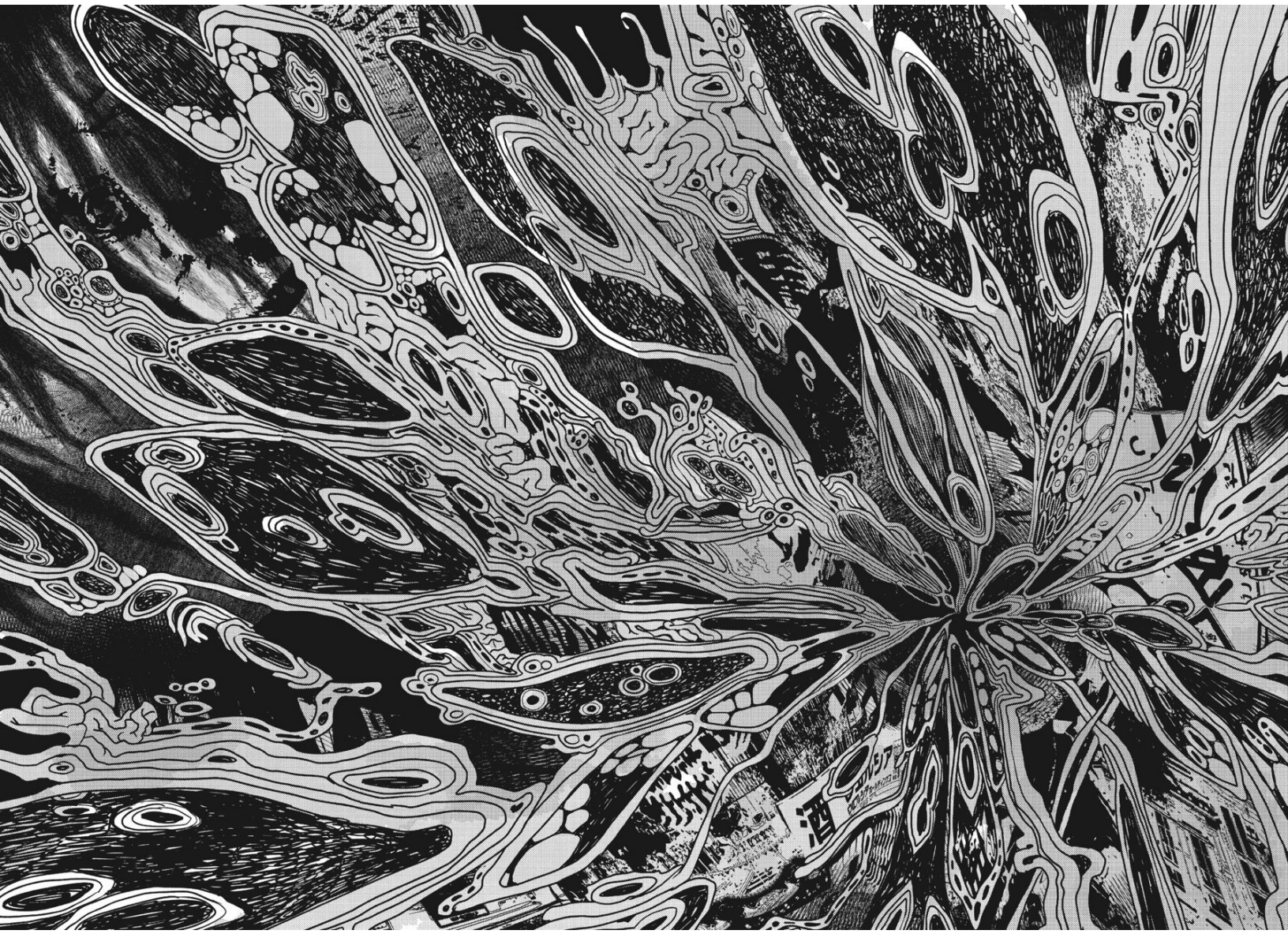
Triangle caps: In Japanese art, ghosts are sometimes depicted with triangular pieces of white cloth tied on their heads.

PAGE 133

Shared baths: Kaoru's use of bath salts is relevant because the family will share the bath in turns. In Japan, the bath is exclusively used for soaking after scrubbing the body clean in the space next to the bathtub using either a shower head or a washbasin.

PAGE 143

Falling into a lake: Hikaru is referencing the well-known fable "The Honest Woodcutter." In the story, a woodcutter drops his axe into a lake. The god of the lake emerges with two axes, one gold and one plain, and asks the woodcutter which is his. The man truthfully identifies his plain axe and is rewarded for his honesty.



THE SUMMER

HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

2

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